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New law strengthens response to domestic violence. PAGE 5

Hafa Adai!

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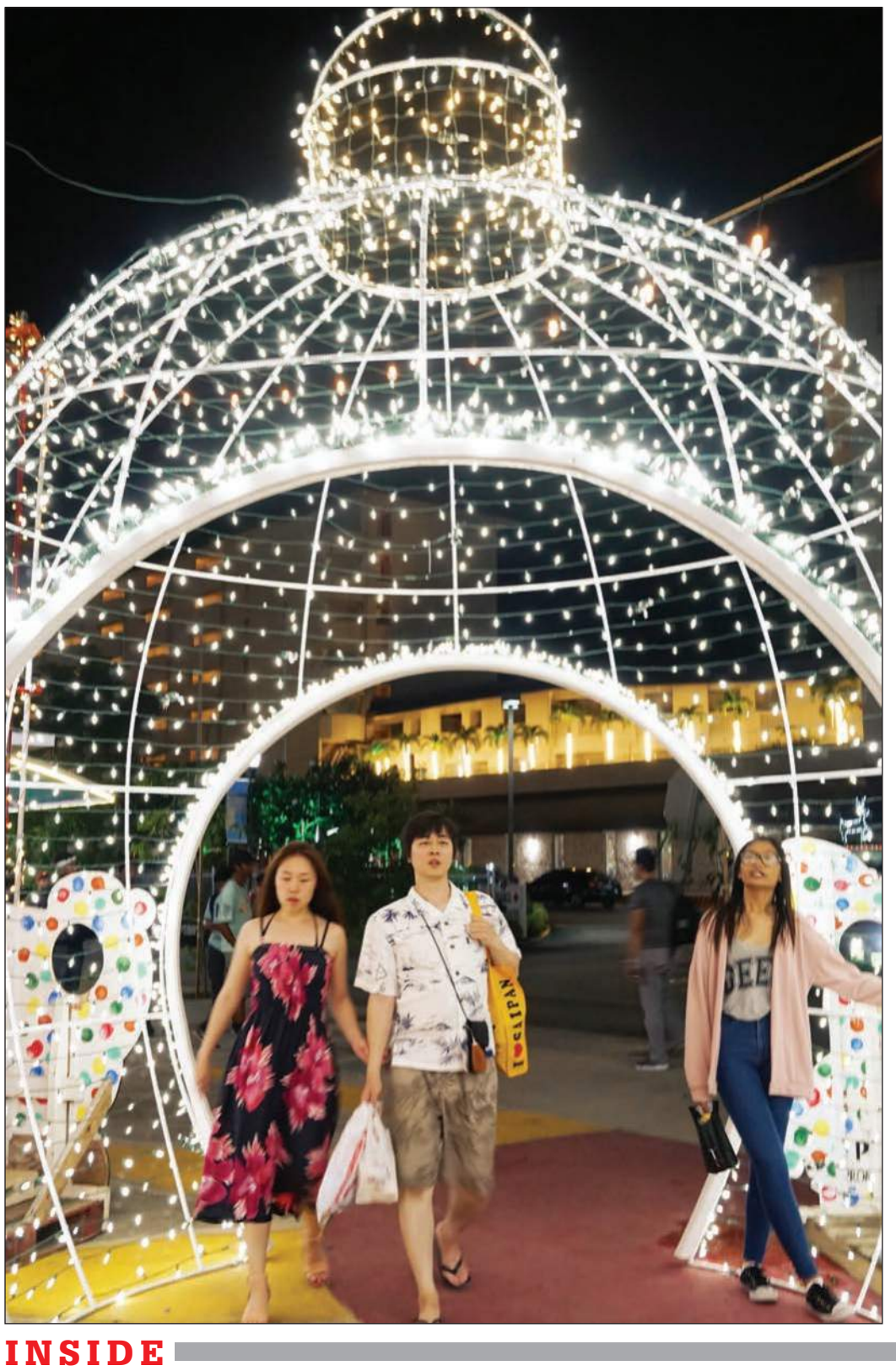
'August 2018 opening still on target'



By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Imperial Pacific Resort Pacific International (CNMI), LLC chair Mark Brown is confident that they will meet the August 2018 deadline to complete the Imperial Pacific Resort in Garapan.

"We are still targeting to open the entire facility in August 2018. Hopefully we can get more U.S. workers here... If we can always continue to move on and hire 2,000 to 4,000 employees with 50 percent U.S.-eligible workers, that's is a big number. That's what we are hoping to do," he said during the first Marianas Film Festival red carpet and awards night Friday at the Imperial Pacific Resort casino.

Brown said IPI needs thousands of construciton workers to build the property and thousands more to run the facility once the hotel is finished.

"We have 200 workers now—all U.S. construction workers—and we have about 200 more coming, so you will see the progress of the property getting done. I wish we had a thousand workers on the site but…you will see it moving along. You see a panel at a time; it will continue to grow," he added.

Imperial Pacific Resort intends to not only be a mecca for gamblers but will also be for everyone—true to its integrated resort con-

See TARGET on Page 4

Remaining illegal workers to be evicted

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC, which is building a casino in Garapan, has notified the seven remaining Chinese tourists that worked illegally for MCC International that it is terminating negotiations and humanitarian support for them.

IPI, which has provided food and shelter to the 38 workers hired by MCC, has notified the seven remaining workers that it would be stopping negotiations, humanitarian support, and coordination of their repatriation to China.

Metro Time (CNMI) LLC, the owner of the building that currently houses the workers, also issued them an eviction notice last Nov. 20, 2017, informing them that they would be evicted 30 days after.

IPI, through its attorney, Sean Frink, notified Qiang Li, of the decision. Li is one of the seven workers who refused to accept the of-

See WORKERS on Page 4

Files show birth of Papua independence struggle

By STEPHEN WRIGHT
ASSOCIATED PRESS

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Prominent Papuans pleaded for the U.S. to give them money and arms in the mid-1960s to fight Indonesia's colonization of their vast remote territory, according to recently declassified American files that show the birth of an independence struggle that endures half a century later.

The documents add to the historical evidence of deep Papuan grievances against Indonesia at a time when clashes between rebels and Indonesian security forces have flared in the impoverished region and Papuan nationalists have succeeded in drawing more attention to their cause at the United Nations. Indonesia's defense minister said last week that activists who attended a recent pro-Pap-

See FILES on Page 4

CHRISTMAS IN THE MARIANAS
Tourists experience the magic of Christmas at the Christmas in the Marianas where lights and decorated trees are on exhibit for the whole month of December at the Paseo de Marianas in Garapan. See story on Page 5
BEA CABRERA

INSIDE

NATION
A powerful flare-up in California's wildfire sends residents fleeing.
PAGE 14

ASIA
Two kiwi birds are a bright spot in a grim assessment of species at risk of extinction.
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LIFE & STYLE
The Glushko's Dance Academy hosted its annual Christmas concert.
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Local

Sobriety checkpoints

The Saipan Highway Patrol Section of the Department of Public Safety will be conducting sobriety checkpoints on the following dates and times:

■ Dec. 15: The first checkpoint will be along Chalan Pale Arnold Rd., from Garapan to Chalan Lau Lau, from 6pm to 8pm. The second checkpoint will be along Chalan Monsignor Guerrero in San Jose to Dandan, from 9pm to 11pm.

■ Dec. 16: The first checkpoint will be along Chalan Monsignor Martinez Rd., from Koblerville to As Lito, from 6pm to 8:30pm. The second checkpoint will be along Beach Road, from Garapan to Chalan Piao, from 9pm to 11pm.

■ Dec. 23: The first checkpoint will be along Chalan Pale Arnold Road, from Garapan to Gualo Rai, from 5pm to 7pm. The second checkpoint will be along Beach Road, from Garapan to Chalan Piao, from 8pm to 10pm.

These activities are part of the Department of Public Safety's Drunk, Drugged, Distracted, Drowsy Prevention Month.

On Rota, the sobriety checkpoints will be held on the following dates and times:

■ Dec. 21: The first setup will be located on San Francisco Highway along Uyulan area, from 6pm to 7:15pm. The second setup will be located on San Francisco Highway along Tatachog Area, from 9pm to 10:15pm.

■ Dec. 23: The first setup will be located on San Francisco Highway along Pinatang Park, from 6:15pm to 7:30pm. The second setup will be located on San Francisco Highway along Sonton Area, from 9:15pm to 10:30pm.

■ Dec. 25: The first setup will be located on San Francisco Highway along Guata Beach Park, from 6:30pm to 7:45pm. The second setup will be located on San Francisco Highway along Igua Area, from 9:30pm to 10:45pm.

■ Jan. 1, 2018: The first setup will be located on San Francisco Highway along Sinapalo Ill Park, from 6pm to 7:15pm. The second setup will be located on San Francisco Highway along Pinatang Park, from 9pm to 10:15pm.

Each checkpoint will last at least 75 minutes (1 hour and 15 minutes).

In addition, highway patrol and patrol officers will be conducting highway criminal

interdictions, saturation patrols, aggressive driver interdictions, and laser (speed detection) enforcement. ***(DPS)***

Tourism Topics

A bi-weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority

Tourism is everybody's business.

The Marianas
| Saipan | Tinian | Rota |

HAFA ADAI & TIROW WAY

What Optional Tours do Visitors Like?

Let's find out more about our visitors, based on the Marianas Visitors Authority's latest visitor exit survey covering August through September 2017. Here's what visitors shared with us before their departure from The Marianas:

Prepaid Expenditures
When asked about their prepaid expenses prior to their travels, visitors indicated most prepared expenses covered hotel/accommodations (86%) and airfare (80%). The third highest prepaid expense was tour/activities, followed by meals.

Preferred Methods of Payments
The preferred method of payment for visitors was cash (54%). Japanese visitors, however, indicated having equal preference between paying with cash and card (47%).

Upcoming Events

- **Christmas in The Marianas**
  Every Saturday evening in December
  5-9 p.m.
  Paseo de Marianas
- **Christmas Parade of Lights**
  Dec. 16, 2017
  5:45 p.m.
  Garapan Fishing Base to American Memorial Park

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Court places suit on quarry permit RFP under advisement

By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A motion to prevent the Department of Public Lands from soliciting proposals for an exclusive quarry permit on public land in As Matuis has been placed under advisement.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho made the move yesterday in the motion for preliminary injunction filed by USA Fanter Corp. Ltd. against DPL last month.

Last October, USA Fanter, through counsel Robert T. Torres, asked the Superior Court to direct DPL and USA Fanter to negotiate on a quarry permit. If the two could not come to an agreement, only then would USA Fanter not block the awarding of the permit.

In the complaint filed, it stated that DPL issued a request for proposal for quarry operator on a 50,000-square-meter land in As Matuis. USA Fanter submitted a proposal on Sept. 16, 2016.

Last November, USA Fanter was informed by DPL that its proposal had not been selected. DPL initially selected Win Win Way but the two were unable to agree on terms that led to Win Win Way's withdrawal.

DPL turned to Blue Oasis LLC, the second highest bidder, but the two were also unsuccessful in reaching an agreement. DPL issued another RFP.

USA Fanter protested the apparent cancellation of the previous RFP and filed a civil case against DPL.

As per court order yesterday, the parties shall file a proposed order on or before Jan. 12, 2018.

"A Tradition of Excellence!"

Dr. Dennis Williams, a renowned eye surgeon, continues the tradition of excellence at Marianas Eye Institute.

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- Board Certified Ophthalmologist

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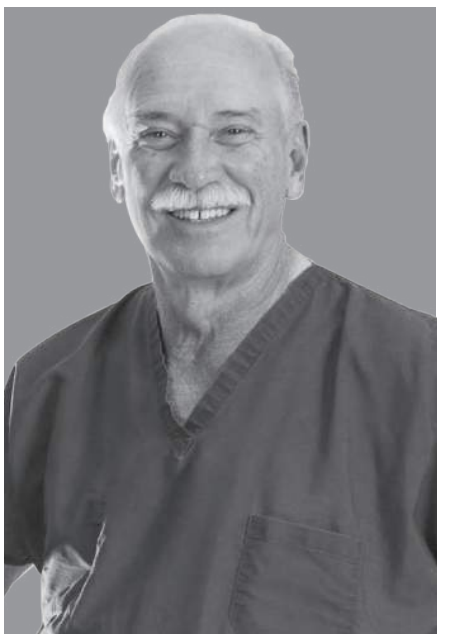
- Director of Corneal Transplant and Refractive Surgery St. Luke's Cataract and Laser Institute, Florida
- Board of Directors, American Board of Eye Surgery
- President, Cataract Teaching Foundation
- Instructor, American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery

We welcome Aetna, Self-pay, Staywell, Netcare, Calvo's, TakeCare, Medicaid, Medicare, Tricare, Blue Cross Blue Shield, and more!



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2017 ACCENT

		DISCOUNT	PRICE
7H232	BLUE, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, ALLOY WHEELS	$3,500	$15,495
7H247	YELLOW, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, ALLOY WHEELS	$3,500	$15,495
7H251	SILVER, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, ALL SOLD ELS	$3,500	$15,495
7H257	WHITE, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, ALLOY WHEELS	$3,500	$15,495
7H258	SILVER, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, ALLOY WHEELS	$3,500	$15,495
7H259	SILVER, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, ALL SOLD LS	$3,500	$15,495
7H260	RED, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, ALLOY SOLD S	$3,500	$15,495
7H261	RED, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, ALLOY WHEELS	$3,500	$15,495
7H270	WHITE, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, ALLOY WHEELS	$3,500	$15,495
7H272	BLACK, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, ALLO SOLD S	$3,500	$15,495

2017 VELOSTER

		DISCOUNT	PRICE
7H220	WHITE, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK SOLD M, ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$17,995
7H233	SILVER, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BAC SOLD M, ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$17,995
7H235	BLUE, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-UP CAM, ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$17,995
7H263	YELLOW, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-UP CAM, ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$17,995
7H264	BLACK, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-UP CAM, ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$17,995

2017 TUCSON

		DISCOUNT	PRICE
7H309	SILVER, 4-CYL. ENG., AT, BACK-U SOLD ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$21,995
7H310	BROWN, 4-CYL. ENG., AT, BACK-UP CAM, ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$21,995
7H311	SILVER, 4-CYL. ENG., AT, BACK-U SOLD ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$21,995
7H323	BLUE, 4-CYL. ENG., AT, BACK-UP CAM, ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$21,995
7H331	BLACK, 4-CYL. ENG., AT, BACK-UP CAM, ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$21,995
7H332	GRAY, 4-CYL. ENG., AT, BACK-UP CAM, ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$21,995
7H336	WHITE, 4-CYL. ENG., AT, BACK-UP CAM, ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$21,995
7H337	WHITE, 4-CYL. ENG., AT, BACK-UP CAM, ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$21,995

MITSUBISHI

2017 OUTLANDER SE

		DISCOUNT	PRICE
7M037	WHITE, 4-CYL. ENGINE, 7-PASSE SOLD 2WD	$4,000	$24,995
7M038	SILVER, 4-CYL. ENGINE, 7-PASSENGER, 2WD	$4,000	$24,995
7M040	BLACK, 4-CYL. ENGINE, 7-PASSE SOLD WD	$4,000	$24,995

mazda

2018 MAZDA 3

		DISCOUNT	PRICE
8D058	WHITE, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BAC SOLD M	$4,000	$16,995
8D059	RED, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-U SOLD	$4,000	$16,995
8D060	RED, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-U SOLD	$4,000	$16,995
8D061	BLACK, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BAC SOLD M	$4,000	$16,995
8D062	BLUE, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-UP CAM	$4,000	$16,995
8D063	SILVER, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-UP CAM	$4,000	$16,995
8D023	BLUE, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK SOLD , ALLOY WHEELS	$5,000	$17,995
8D025	SILVER, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BAC SOLD M, ALLOY WHEELS	$5,000	$17,995
8D026	GRAY, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-UP CAM, ALLOY WHEELS	$5,000	$17,995
8D037	RED, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK- SOLD ALLOY WHEELS	$5,000	$17,995
8D039	BROWN, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BAC SOLD AM, ALLOY WHEELS	$5,000	$17,995
8D040	BLUE, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-UP CAM, ALLOY WHEELS	$5,000	$17,995
8D027	WHITE, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-UP CAM, HATCHBACK	$5,000	$17,995
8D028	GRAY, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK SOLD , HATCHBACK	$5,000	$17,995
8D041	BLACK, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-UP CAM, HATCHBACK	$5,000	$17,995
8D042	BLACK, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-UP CAM, HATCHBACK	$5,000	$17,995
8D014	GRAY, LEATHER SEAT, AT, HATCHBACK, GRAND TOURING	$4,000	$22,995

2017 MX-5

		DISCOUNT	PRICE
7D121	GRAY, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, CLUB SOFT-TOP	$8,000	$25,995
7D203	RED, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, CLUB SOLD OP	$8,000	$25,995

2018 CX-3 SPORT

		DISCOUNT	PRICE
8D043	WHITE, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK SOLD , ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$19,995
8D045	RED, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-UP CAM, ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$19,995
8D048	BLUE, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-U SOLD ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$19,995
8D049	BROWN, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-UP CAM, ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$19,995
8D050	BLUE, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-UP CAM, ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$19,995
8D051	CERAMIC, 4-CYL. ENGINE, AT, BACK-UP CAM, ALLOY WHEELS	$4,000	$19,995

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'Magic Camp@My Public Library' is completely full

Joeten-Kiyu Public Library has closed the registration for its upcoming magic camp as all available slots have already been filled.

"Magic Camp@My Public Library" is free and sponsored by the Friends of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library. It features Leon Etienne, who is currently starring in "Magic Rocks!" at the Sandcastle.

Before coming to Saipan, Etienne performed in NBC's "America's Got Talent," on NBC's "The Tonight show with Jimmy Fallon," as a winner on the CW's "Penn & Teller: Fool Us," "Masters of Illusion," and SYFY Channel's "Wizard Wars."

Those who were not able to register for the magic camp are instead invited to join the 26th Joeten-Kiyu Public Library Anniversary Celebration on Dec. 29, from 11:30am to 2pm.

JKPL said the event includes a free magic show performance, as well as, a mini carnival. Magic kits will be sold onsite for those who were unable to participate in the "Magic Camp@My Public Library."

For more information, contact the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library at 235-7315/6. Visit facebook: joeten kiyu, and its website at www.cnmilib.org for the latest library news and updates. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

FILES

From Page 1

uan independence meeting in Vanuatu should be arrested on return to Indonesia.

The files are among the thousands of pages of cables between the State Department and the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta from the 1960s that were declassified earlier this year. The 37 boxes of telegrams are stored at the National Archives and Records Administration in Maryland and researchers are working on making them available online.

Papua, which makes up the western half of the giant island of New Guinea, remained in Dutch hands after Indonesia shook off colonial rule at the end of World War II. Many Indonesians saw their government's campaign in the early 1960s to take Papua from the Dutch as the final victory in their struggle for independence. But to Papuans, with a Melanesian culture and history distinct from Southeast Asia, Indonesia was a hostile colonizer.

The rest of the world looked away as a rigged vote of a little more than 1,000 hand-picked and closely managed Papuans cemented Indonesia's control in 1969. The Netherlands, which before annexation was preparing Papua for self-rule, did not object. The U.S., which in 1967 helped American mining company Freeport secure rights to exploit rich copper and gold deposits in Papua, did not want to upset a status quo favorable for U.S. business or destabilize Indonesia's pro-U.S. government.

An April 1966 cable from the State Department recorded the "eloquence and intensity" of Markus Kaisiepo, an exiled Papuan leader, who spoke with a senior U.S. official about the "desperate plight of the Papua people under Indonesian rule."

Kaisiepo said Papuans were determined to have independence but were completely without financial resources or the military equipment needed to "rise against the Indonesian oppressors."

Kaisiepo, whose son would also become a prominent advocate for Papuan independence, asked if the U.S. "could provide money and arms secretly to assist him and his movement." He was rebuffed, as was another Papuan leader, Nicolaas Jouwe, who made a similar request to the U.S. in September 1965 and also to Australia.

The documents also show how officials looted the region after Indonesia annexed it in 1962 and brought about a collapse in living standards, stoking anger that boiled over into outright rebellion. But the biggest source of resentment was Indonesia's reluctance to honor its U.N.-supervised and U.S.-brokered treaty with the Netherlands, which mandated that Papuans would decide in a plebiscite whether to stay with Indonesia or become self-ruled.

After U.N. troops left Papua, Indonesians systematically looted public buildings and sent the booty to Jakarta, the April 1966 cable said, citing Kaisiepo. Hospitals built by the Dutch were stripped of beds, X-ray equipment and medicines, desks were taken from schools and soldiers stole anything "that took their fancy" from private homes.

Other cables citing American missionaries working in Papua described widespread food shortages, and how Indonesian officials bought up all consumer goods and shipped them out of Papua for a profit. When shipments of goods and food arrived at ports, Indonesian troops would commandeer them.

Victor Yeimo, chairman of the pro-Independence West Papuan National Committee, said the documents are "very important" because they provide evidence of crimes against Papuans by the Indonesian military and the U.S. role in denying self-determination. Administratively, Indonesia divides the region into two provinces, Papua and West Papua, but Papuans refer to both as West Papua.

"Information gained from these documents shows the world and today's generation that the U.S. and Indonesia have been hand-in-hand in hiding the truth all along. The economic and political interests of the U.S. played a big role in West Papua's colonization," Yeimo said. "We, West Papuans, have been butchered since Indonesia first entered our land and up to now. And we have never seen any justice."

Papuans were not without supporters in the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta but their views did not prevail. In August 1965, the embassy's political officer Edward E. Masters recommended the department leak word of violent uprisings against Indonesia's rule in Papua to the world press. Without the glare of publicity, Papuans would suffer "complete colonial subjugation" by Indonesia, he wrote in a prescient cable.

Citing the U.S. role in negotiating the 1962 treaty between the Netherlands and Indonesia, Masters wrote "we would appear to have a special responsibility to see that the terms of that treaty concerning ascertainment of the true wishes of the Papuan people are respected."

Another cable written by Ambassador Marshall Green, however, described Papuans as "stone-age" people. Their "horizons are strictly limited," it said, and they weren't capable of deciding their own future, contradicting other assessments by the embassy of Papuans' widespread desire for independence.

Word of violent uprisings, which began about March 1965, began trickling out of Papua as American missionaries who were working in the region visited Jakarta and embassy officials tapped sources in the Indonesian military for information.

In June 1965, rebels launched a full-scale attack on a government post in the town of Wamena that killed at least a dozen Indonesian soldiers and an unknown number of Papuans.

"No figure on the number of Papuans killed is available but one informant described it as a 'slaughter,' since almost the only weapons in the hands of the highland Papuans were knives and bows and arrows," said a cable sent two months later.

The same document reported that rebels overran most of Manokwari, a major coastal town, in early August and held it for a week until beaten back by Indonesian soldiers.

A massacre by Indonesian forces the previous month may have been a catalyst for that attack.

A Dutch missionary told U.S. officials that rebels had shot three soldiers raising a flag in a valley near Manokwari in late July.

"Indo reaction was brutal," said a cable transmitted in September 1965. "Soldiers next day sprayed bullets at any Papuan in sight and many innocent travelers on roads gunned down. Bitterness thus created not easily healed."

By early 1967, there were persistent rumors within Indonesia and abroad that 1,000 to 2,000 Papuans had been killed by an Indonesian air force bombing campaign.

TARGET

From Page 1

cept, Brown said.

"We are building a little Las Vegas… once the building is up and running, it is going to be like a little city…That is our goal and the plan that we want to create. It's not always about gaming, it is everything," he said.

"When we open in August 2018, people can expect a bigger event because everything will be open. We will have the inside and outside facilities operational and we will have the beach. A huge event will be perfect fit to a grand opening," he added.

In every gambling jurisdiction, Brown said, from Las Vegas to Macau, it's all about the shows, the conventions, the Michelin restaurants, and the great spas.

"We will have all of those when the building is finished. Yes, the gaming is there, as gaming is where you make your money, but everyone knows that no one comes just for that. You need the great restaurants, you need the nightclubs the spa to get the family coming," he added.

Building a city within a city and managing thousands of employees are things that Brown is confident of doing, given the right means and vision.

"My entire career has been gaming. I was born in Atlantic City, New Jersey. I came up from the bottom in Atlantic City, worked there for 27 years. I ran one of [President Donald] Trump's properties for 14 years and at one point, I became the CEO of Trump's casinos for my last five years, specifically 2000-2005," Brown said.

"I love being in this business…In 2005, I left for Macau where the Sands Macau is. We opened the Venetian Macau with 3,000 rooms and 20,000 employees… At IPI right now, we have 17,000 employees in our whole company, construction workers not included," Brown added.

As the construction of the Imperial Pacific Resort moves forward, Brown said it will become a lot easier to have big events on Saipan similar to the first Marianas Film Festival, which drew 500 celebrities from China, Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom.

"This is just the beginning. In Macau, especially, we have a 15,000-seat arena just through the door and we had every single artist that you can think of internationally. Having 15,000 people unload to enjoy the bar and the clubs when the show is over is what I am used to,' he said.

"We are going to have many entertainment, many shows, have more events like this," he said.

Brown recognizes the shared difficulties that all businesses on island are facing.

"As you know, the difficulties that we've had so far dealing with CWs are construction workers. Our governor right now is in Washington, D.C. helping all of us. Think about it it, we need three, four or five times more people than anyobody else on the island. So whatever problem a local restaurant is facing, multiply that by 20, that is our problem," he said.

WORKERS

From Page 1

fer IPI made for their repatriation. The letter, dated Nov. 20, 2017, added that IPI's offer to pay Li the amount owed him according to the CNMI Department of Labor, would expire on Nov. 27, 2017, at 3pm.

"IPI has made repeated and good faith efforts to assist you in your situation, but your demands for payment beyond what CNMI DOL has determined you are owed before you will agree to return to China has caused IPI to determine that, effective immediately, it will no longer pay to house and feed you," Frink wrote Li on behalf of IPI.

IPI has been supporting the workers, including providing them food and shelter, on humanitarian grounds, despite the lack of legal responsibility to do so.

Speaking through a translator, Li said he came to Saipan with a friend named Dong Guang Xin. According to Li, he and Dong worked together for MCC and started and ended at the same day.

Dong was reportedly part of a group that came to a settlement with the U.S. Department of Labor back in April 2017. According to Li, Dong was paid $18,800 cash to return to China, which reportedly included the amount he paid in recruitment fees.

IPI reportedly offered Li $5,129.68 in compensation for the time that he has worked under MCC. According to the translator, Li has been waiting on Saipan for eight months to be paid, including recruitment fees, liquidated damages, and fees for the months of delay. IPI made him an offer after consulting with CNMI DOL.

Li thinks he has been placed in an "unfair" situation. "I attached the lights outside of the casino with my own hands. This weekend, I saw all the famous movie stars and directors enjoying this casino. But I am still here eight months later, just waiting to be paid, with no food, no water. I feel it is very unfair," said Li.

According to Frink's letter, Li is asking for an additional $4,870.32, on top of the offered $5,129.68.

"You [Li] wanted [this amount] for unspecified and/or legally or factually unsupportable reasons and IPI refused to pay you this extra amount," wrote Frink.

A lawyer familiar with the matter who refused to be named cited the Fair Labor Standards Act, which says an employee is entitled to additional liquidated damages when they are not paid on time.

"Federal law is very clear that when a worker is not paid the minimum wage or overtime required by law, the worker is then owed additional damages in the amount of 100 percent of the underpayment," the lawyer said. "This is routinely part of settlements and regularly awarded by courts. If there were no penalty for failing to pay workers correctly the first time, employers would have no motivation to get it right. Having now waited eight months since their employment ended, these workers' request for additional compensation has a well-founded legal and factual basis."

New law strengthens response to domestic violence

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Acting governor Victor B. Hocog signed into law yesterday a bill that seeks to improve the justice system's response to domestic violence.

House Speaker Rafael Demapan's (R-Saipan) House Bill 20-14 enhances the punishments imposed on those found guilty of strangulation, stalking, and domestic violence.

Under what is now known as Public Law 20-28, strangulation will now be considered a felony, punishable by imprisonment of not more than seven years. Under the new law, there is no need to prove that a person intended to injure or kill the victim. The only thing required to prosecute is the intent to strangle or attempt to strangle.

P.L. 20-28 also revisited stalking, redefining it to mean action that would cause a person to fear for his or her safety or cause him or her to suffer emotional distress.

"…It shall not be a defense that the [stalker] was not given actual notice that the course of conduct was unwanted or the actor did not intend to cause the victim fear or other emotional distress," states the law, adding that these reasons were not sufficient as a defense for stalking.

Stalking in the first degree is now a felony punishable by imprisonment of up to four years, a fine of up to $2,000, or both. Stalking in the second degree is a felony punishable by up to one year imprisonment, a fine of up to $1,000, or both.

"…Whenever strangulation is used to intimidate, terrorize, or physically abuse the victim, the chances of lethality is seven times more than [other unarmed methods]," said Maisie Tenorio, executive director of the Northern Marianas Coalition against Domestic and Sexual Violence.

"Recognizing [strangulation] in law is extremely important to make sure that we keep victims safe," said Tenorio, adding that the new law is also beneficial to Department of Public Safety officers, who now have more tools to "keep the community safe."

"…I want the officers to exercise accordingly and when we respond to such a call, your word would prevail," said acting governor Victor B. Hocog in a statement.

"We [should] always put forward that we are there as a peace officer and we are there to help people, not to scare people," he said, adding that he believes that the more officers are accepted in the community, the more officers could help.

Acting governor Victor B. Hocog signs into law House Bill 20-28 as the bill's author, House Speaker Rafael Demapan (R-Saipan), looks on.
ERWIN ENCINARES

Christmas in the Marianas returns

By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Christmas in the Marianas entered its second Saturday last week, drawing tourists and residents alike to the Paseo de Marianas to promenade, take pictures, or simply gawk at the many Christmas trees on display.

The Christmas tree decoration contest by elementary students highlights the return of Christmas in the Marianas every Saturday in December in Garapan, according to Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Chris Concepcion.

"The enthusiasm of students is contagious and we invite the public to come down any or every night for the festivities. We really can't say enough about the effort of our partners PDM Promoters and Team PDI in making this a joyful holiday for the children, and especially the education tax credit donations given by local businesses for the schools," he said.

A total of 18 schools have taken part in the Christmas tree decoration contest and the rule is that only recycled materials will be used. The participating schools for this year are Oleai, San Vicente, Gregorio T. Camacho, William S. Reyes, Garapan, Koblerville, and Kagman elementary school; Hopwood, Tanapag, Dandan, and Cha Cha Ocean View middle schools; Saipan Community School, Green Meadow School, Northern Marianas International School, Saipan International School, Agape Christian School, Grace Christian Academy, and Saipan Seventh Day Adventist School.

Aside from enjoying the display, people can choose from a variety of restaurants located at the Paseo de Marianas and the food tents available every Saturday that sells shakes, snacks, and finger foods.

On Saturday, Dec. 16, the public is invited to witness two activities: the Parade of Floats that will start at sunset from the Carolinian Affairs Office on Beach Road to the American Memorial Park and a costume show that will immediately follow.

Awards and winners for all competitions will also be announced on the same night.

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Shepard named DPS spokesperson

Jacqueline Rae Shepard is the new spokesperson of the Department of Public Safety, effective yesterday.

She takes over the post from Lt. Jason Tarkong, who has been doing the job in an acting capacity.

Prior to DPS, Shepard worked as a news anchor for KSPN TV.

"I am very excited that Dec. 11, 2017, marks my first day as DPS public information officer. During my time as a news anchor and reporter, I've had several opportunities to work with our police officers and DPS Commissioner Robert Guerrero. Every interaction left me impressed with the professionalism and integrity exhibited by both the officers and staff," she said.

Shepard is originally from Aurora, Colorado. She earned her degree in Broadcast Communications from Metropolitan State University in Denver. She then moved to Los Angeles, during which she worked for Torrance City Cable. ***(Bea Cabrera)***

A total of 34 Saipan Awaodori Team members and Kinpachi Restaurant staff took part in the cleanup that collected 600 lbs of trash.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

PDM monthly cleanup yields 600 lbs of trash

Thirty-four volunteers from the Saipan Awaodori Team and Kinpachi Restaurant took part in PDM Promoters, Inc.'s final cleanup of the year last Saturday at the Paseo de Marianas.

Led by Kinpachi Restaurant CEO and director Misako Kamata, the cleanup collected 600 lbs of trash strewn along the roads of Coral Tree Avenue, Beach Road, and the American Memorial Park.

The volunteers were made up 27 Saipan Awaodori Team members and seven Kinpachi Restaurant employees and they picked up trash from 9am and 11am.

PDM Promoters cleanup drive coordinator Sonia G. Siwa thanked the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality for once again helping PDM Promoters by waiving the fee for trash disposal.

"We appreciate all the help and support we get from T-Galleria and TSL Foundation—our major sponsors—and BECQ and the Department of Public Works-Division of Solid Waste Management," Siwa added.

Siwa said T-Galleria and TSL Foundation's support enables them to have the cleaning materials needed on their monthly cleanups. Kinpachi Restaurant, meanwhile, provides the meals and snacks for the volunteers.

PDM Promoters' monthly cleanups are held every Saturday. Volunteers of PDM Promoters will be at it again in January. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Landfill, transfer station closed on Sat.

On Saturday, Dec. 16, 2017, both the Lower Base transfer station and the Marpi landfill waste disposal facilities will be closed at 3pm in preparation for the Department of Public Works' annual Christmas party. ***(PR)***

Water service interruption on Saipan

There will be a scheduled water service interruption today, Dec. 12, and tomorrow, Dec. 13, from 8am to 5pm, in several areas on Saipan to repair a leak in a 6-inch transmission line.

The water outage will affect Koblerville, San Antonio, Chalan Kanoa, Susupe, San Jose, Oleai, Chalan Piao, As Lito and Fina Sisu areas. Customers in these areas should expect restoration of services soon thereafter.

Repairs will be located on the corner of Guangdong Hardware in As Lito. ***(CUC)***

Survivors, caregivers support meeting on Dec. 14

All people facing cancer, their family members, and caregivers are invited to the Commonwealth Cancer Association support meeting on Thursday, Dec. 14, 2017, starting at 5:30pm at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's Chamolinian Room. Guest speaker will be Salome A. Castro of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. To RSVP or for more information, call the CCA at 682-0050 or email at ccamarianas@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

Military training at Warning Area 517, Farallon de Medinilla

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. military will conduct training at Warning Area 517 during the following dates and times:

- Dec. 13, from noon to 10pm.
- Dec. 14, from 8:30am to 10:30pm.

The military will also conduct training at the island of Farallon de Medinilla during the following dates and times:

- Dec. 12, from 8:30am to 6:30pm.
- Dec. 13, from noon to 10pm.
- Dec. 14, from 8:30am to 10:30pm.
- Dec. 15, from 10:30am to 3:30pm.

It is recommended the general public, fishermen and marine tour operators monitor the Coast Guard broadcast notice to mariners for advisories.

W-517 is activated south of latitude 12° 40' 00"N. Santa Rosa Reef and Galvez Banks are open for public use.

The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla will be in a 12-nautical mile radius of the island. ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
Phone: (670) 237-6500 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Commonwealth Ports Authority hereby gives notice that a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Friday, December 15, 2017, at 9:30 a.m. in the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Classroom located at the Airport Fire Station at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport on the island of Saipan. The following items are on the agenda for the above-referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes (October 31, 2017)

II. PUBLIC COMMENT(S)
III. CORRESPONDENCES
IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS
1. Financial Affairs Committee
2. Airport Facilities Committee
3. Seaport Facilities Committee
4. Personnel Affairs Committee

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
VI. OLD BUSINESS
1. Staff Attorney
2. Coldwell Solar

VII. NEW BUSINESS
1. Personnel Matter:
a. Employment Contracts: Renewals/Compensation
i. Executive Director
ii. Deputy Director
iii. Comptroller
b. Position Description: Custodial/Maintenance II (Rota Seaport)
2. Saipan Star (China Star)
3. Lease Renewals:
a. Docomo Pacific
b. Bank of Guam
c. Huangshun

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION
• Legal Counsel Report: Legal matters/Litigation
IX. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS
X. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items.

/s/ JOSE R. LIFOIFOI
Chairman, Board of Directors
December 11, 2017

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Division of Fish & Wildlife
Department of Lands and Natural Resources
Lower Base, P.O. Box 10007
Saipan, MP 96950

SMILING COVE MARINA TRANSIENT DOCK PUBLIC MEETING

This is to inform the public and all Smiling Cove Marina Transient Dock users, that there will be a meeting open to the public, at the American Memorial Park Amphitheater on Tuesday, December 19, 2017 at 6:00 pm.

The purpose of this meeting is to allow for questions and answers related to the new process at the Smiling Cove Marina Transient Dock. Discussions will specifically address proposed regulations, fee schedules & assigning loading/unloading schedules for Commercial users.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS LICENSING BOARD
P.O. Box 502078, Bldg., 1242 Pohnpei Court
Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel No: (670) 664-4809 Fax: (670) 664-4814
Email: cnmi@cnmibpl-hcplb.net
Website: cnmibpl-hcplb.net

Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Victor B. Hocog, through the Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPLB) are hereby giving notice that it will hold its regular monthly board meeting on ***Wednesday, December 13, 2017 at 12:00noon*** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the CHCC Conference Room #2, Lower Navy Hill.

AGENDA

I. **Meeting Call to Order**
II. **Determination of Quorum**
III. **Review and Adoption of Agenda**
IV. **Review and Adoption of Minutes (11/15/17)**
V. **Public Comments**
VI. **Chairperson's Report**
VII. **Director's Report**
• Quarterly Declaration Report for physician #541
VIII. **Investigator's Report**
IX. **Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature**
A. Governor's Office
B. Legislature
X. **Old Business:**
• FSMB Compact membership
XI. **New Business:**
XII. **Pending Applications for Board's Review**
A. New Applications:
B. Renewal Applications:
• Physician #0608
XIII. **Miscellaneous Business**
XIV. **Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with counsel with pending or anticipated legal matters.**
XV. **Announcements**
A. Next Meeting Date
B. Adjournment of Meeting

/s/ Theodore R. Parker, R.Ph., MPH
Chairman

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2016 Corolla LE
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WAS $19,899*
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2016 Corolla LE Sedan
4-cyl, Auto, FWD, White, STK#U17-119R
WAS $19,999*
NOW $19,299*

2015 Prius HV, 4-dr Hatchback
4-cyl, Auto, FWD, Silver, STK#U17-102R
WAS $21,999*
NOW $20,999*

2012 Sienna LE
4-cyl, Auto, FWD, Red, STK#U17-092T
WAS $22,799*
NOW $21,799*

2016 Camry LE
4-dr, 4-cyl, Auto, FWD, Gray, STK#U17-106R
WAS $22,699*
NOW $22,199*

2013 Toyota Highlander LE SUV
4-cyl, Auto, 6-spd, 2WD, Silver, STK#U17-126T
NOW $23,499*

2016 Mazda CX-5 Grand Touring Sport
4-cyl, Auto, AWD, White, STK#U17-122T
WAS $26,399*
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2011 Tacoma DC 4X4
V6, Auto, Green, STK#U17-091T
WAS $25,699*
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2016 Tacoma Access Cab
SR, 4-cyl, Auto, 2WD, White, STK#U17-130L
NOW $25,999*

2016 Tacoma Access Cab
SR, 4-cyl, Auto, 2WD, White, STK#U17-129L
NOW $26,199*

2015 Tacoma Double Cab
4-cyl, Auto, 2WD, Black, STK#U17-132T
NOW $26,999*

2015 Highlander LE
4-cyl, Auto, 6-spd, 2WD, Gray, STK#U17-021F
WAS $29,999
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NOW $28,699*

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NOW $29,399*

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WAS $30,599*
NOW $29,599*

2015 Tacoma Double Cab
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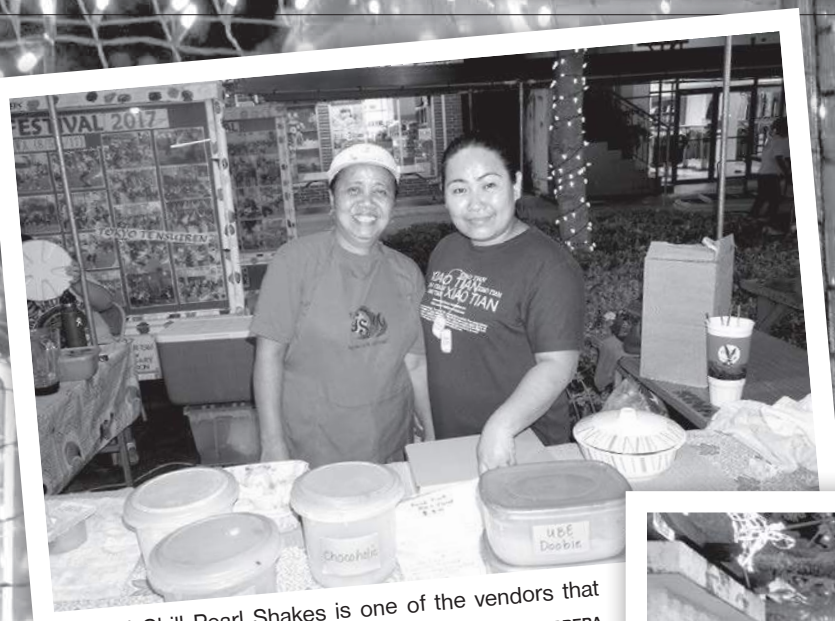
Christmas in the Marianas



Tropical Chill Pearl Shakes is one of the vendors that joined Christmas In the Marianas this year. BEA CABRERA

Kinpachi Restaurant employees pose for a photo. It is their second year to join Christmas in the Marianas and attests that the display this year is brighter and better than last year.

BEA CABRERA

Family-oriented Christmas displays impress the visitors at the Paseo de Marianas where the Christmas in the Marianas is being held.

BEA CABRERA

A non-traditional Christmas tree made up of chord lights welcomes the public to the Paseo de Marianas where the Christmas in the Marianas is being held.

BEA CABRERA

Children enjoy the "stick your face" figurines of their favorite cartoon characters at the Paseo de Marianas where the Christmas in the Marianas is being held.

BEA CABRERA

The Lantian family from Chalan Kanoa visit the Paseo de Marianas where the Christmas in the Marianas is being held.

BEA CABRERA

A giant Christmas tree is located in the middle of the Paseo de Marianas where the Christmas in the Marianas is being held.

BEA CABRERA

Christmas in the Marianas encourages adults to feel young and be childlike, which is the one of the joys of Christmas.

BEA CABRERA

Couple, man arrested for 'ice' trafficking, possession

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Drug Enforcement Task Force arrested last week a man and his common-law wife for alleged trafficking in methamphetamine or "ice" while another man was arrested for "ice" possession.

Luis Pedro R. Demapan, 45, and Lorraine Sanchez Ada, 39, were arrested for trafficking and illegal possession of a controlled substance. David M. Sablan, 34, was arrested for illegal possession of a controlled substance.

At a hearing last Thursday, Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo imposed a $100,000 cash bail on Demapan and Ada, and $5,000 cash on Sablan.

Preliminary hearing for Demapan and Ada will be this Friday at 9am, while Sablan's will be this Wednesday at 9am.

The court will appoint a private counsel for Demapan and Ada, while Chief Public Defender Douglas Hartig was appointed as counsel for Sablan.

A confidential source of the task force managed to buy from Demapan $250 and $300 worth of "ice" during a first and second "buy-walk operation in Dandan and in Susupe last Oct. 25 and Nov. 3. During a third "buy-walk" operation in Chalan Laulau last Nov. 3, Ada, in the presence of Demapan and their minor child, handed $150 worth of "ice" to the confidential source.

When arrested last Dec. 1, Demapan and Ada volunteered to help law enforcement as "cooperating defendants" and were released.

With their help, the task force managed to arrest a Chinese national for "ice" during a "buy-walk" operation last Dec. 2.

Since then, Demapan and Ada have not been following the conditions of their agreement with the task force and were re-arrested last Wednesday.

In Sablan's case, he tried to punch and hit a man with a baton during an argument over a wall power outlet at a poker arcade in San Antonio last Oct. 1. The victim called 911, resulting in Sablan's arrest that same day.

While being transported to the Department of Corrections, Sablan told one officer that there was drug paraphernalia inside his pouch and to get rid of it. The officer allegedly found from the pouch three baggies of "ice" and one glass pipe. Sablan allegedly admitted that the seized "ice" and the glass pipe belonged to him.

United expands features on smart devices

GUAM—United Airlines announced yesterday even more ways for its tech-savvy customers to use some of their favorite smart devices, such as the Google Assistant on their phone or Google Home as well as the Fitbit Ionic smartwatch to help manage their travel. United is the first airline to allow customers to use apps via the Google Assistant and Fitbit Ionic smartwatch for quick and convenient access to information and check in for flights, just in time to provide the perfect gift for travelers during the upcoming holiday season.

"Consumers around the world use smart devices every day to conveniently complete a variety of different tasks," said Praveen Sharma, vice president of digital products and analytics at United. "Adding a United app to the Google Assistant and Fitbit Ionic allows us to meet our customers on devices they already know and love, while making it easier than ever to check flight status, check in, learn about MileagePlus account details and receive their boarding passes."

The new United app on the Google Assistant lets customers use smart speakers like Google Home, and eligible Android and iPhone devices to stay up-to-date on their flight. Once customers have linked their MileagePlus account to the Google Assistant, users can say "talk to United" to hear their flight status, check amenities and check in for their upcoming flight. The new app also allows Google Assistant users to check their MileagePlus account balances, hear their last account activity, check in for their United domestic U.S. flights and hear flight information.

Earlier yesterday, Fitbit announced additions to its App Gallery that allows owners of the Ionic smartwatch to choose from more than 60 apps and 100+ clock faces to personalize their watch. United, which is the first airline app coming to Fitbit Ionic, will allow customers to receive flight status information and their boarding pass on the device with no need to pull out their phone. To access the United app on the Ionic smartwatch, customers can connect their MileagePlus account in the United app settings within the Fitbit mobile app, and sync Ionic to update the watch.

In September, United became the first U.S.-based airline to allow customers to offer an Amazon Alexa skill, which allows customers to check in for their trips and receive flight information on Alexa-enabled devices. The airline continues looking for opportunities to offer innovative options to improve the customer experience.

United Airlines and United Express operate approximately 4,500 flights a day to 337 airports across five continents. ***(United)***

First responders undergo WMD training

TAMUNING, Guam—This week, the Federal Bureau of Investigation is hosting a series of training workshops on handling weapons of mass destruction incidents for first responders and emergency management specialists working on Tinian, Saipan, and Guam.

These workshops, from Dec. 11 to 14, will provide an advanced, hands-on understanding of the hazards posed by weapons of mass destruction and better prepare Guam and the CNMI to handle an incident involving these werapons.

Experts from the FBI will give presentations and demonstrations using a mock "home-made" chemical lab to provide participants real examples of what to be on-the-lookout for.

Trained agents and biowarfare scholars will also share lessons learned from past events, and cover topics ranging from radiological awareness, agro-terrorism and biological threats.

"This workshop is designed to provide valuable training to first responders so they will recognize the signs and identify the use of WMD during the initial stages of an incident," said FBI special agent John Kowatch. "With this knowledge, they can react to an incident with the most appropriate, efficient and effective response to protect the public."

In the event of a weapons of mass destruction incident, the FBI and local first responders would work together to address the threat. This training will bring people face to face with their counterparts and build connections for future partnerships.

The workshop took place on Tinian on Dec. 11, today, Dec. 12, on Saipan, and on Dec. 13 and 14 on Guam. ***(PR)***

Saipan Tribune Make it your DAILY habit.

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TEL.: (670) 234-6547
FAX: (670) 234-9537

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANK PACIFIC, LTD., Plaintiff, -v- MATTHEW A. OOKA, RITA M. OOKA, and the SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, Defendants.) CIVIL ACTION NO. 13-0238

SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANTS, MATTHEW A. OOKA AND RITA M. OOKA:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is served upon you hereby, within twenty-one (21) days after the fourth publication of this Summons, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC, the Plaintiff's attorney, whose address is Post Office Box 522, Saipan, MP, 96950, as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of Court at Susupe, Saipan. It may be prepared and signed for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice.

If you fail to answer in accordance with this Summons, judgement by default may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

Dated November 15, 2017 by order of the Court:
/s/
Clerk of Court

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairman of the Board, is hereby giving notice that the Regular Board Meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, December 14, 2017 – 9:00 a.m. at the NMHC Conference Room, Garapan, Saipan.** The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in advance.

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
a. Call to Order
b. Roll Call
c. Adoption of Agenda

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
a. Divisional Updates

IV. OLD BUSINESS
a. Garapan Annex Update
b. Personnel Matters

V. NEW BUSINESS
a. 2017 LIHTC Application
b. HOME Policies and Procedures Amendments
c. Loan Modification Request

VI. LEGAL COUNSEL'S PENDING/ONGOING REPORT

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

VIII. OTHER MATTERS

IX. ADJOURNMENT

(Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a) (7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

/s/
IGNACIO L. PEREZ
Chairman of the Board

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality
DEQ: P.O. Box 501304, DCRM: P.O. Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950-1304
DEQ Tel.: (670) 664-8500/01; Fax: (670) 664-8540
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Ralph DLG. Torres, Governor
Victor B. Hocog, Lt. Governor
Eli D. Cabrera, Administrator
Ray S. Masga, Director, DEQ
Janice Castro, Director, DCRM

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality is giving this reminder notice that the importation and sale of foreign, misbranded, adulterated, and/or any unregistered pesticides and pesticide devices is a violation of the CNMI Pesticide Regulations. The legal definition of a pesticide is any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling or mitigating any pest.

In accordance with NMIAC § 65-70-101, all pesticides and pesticide devices must be contain the following USEPA labeling requirements in English: Name of pesticide in bold letters; restricted use (if applicable); description of pest controlled; chemical name of pesticide; active ingredients; appropriate signal words (caution, warning, or danger); and directions for proper use.

It is unlawful in the CNMI to import or sell any misbranded and/or adulterated pesticide or pesticide device that is not actively registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and does not meet the USEPA's product labeling requirements. Or pesticides and pesticide devices whose labeling bear any statement, design, or graphic representation relative thereto or to its ingredients which is false or misleading in any particular.

The importation, sale or distribution of illegal pesticides in the CNMI places our community, especially children, at risk of being harmed. The BECQ Pesticide Management branch is charged with the responsibility to regulate the importation, sale and distribution of pesticides, legal or illegal to ensure public health and a clean and healthy environment. BECQ staff regularly inspects business establishments for any misbranded products. Should misbranded items be found, all misbranded pesticides will be confiscated and penalties may be assessed.

For more information please contact BECQ at 664-8500 or 664-8511.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

Start preparing for a drier future

Wildfires have been a part of the California ecosystem since long before modern settlement, let alone the exurban sprawl that brings housing and development into fire-prone areas. We tend to deal with the possibility of raging firestorms abstractly—local governments do a little planning, fire departments offer advice on clearing brush and other flammables from property, insurers sell policies to cover our losses if a fire actually burns our homes and businesses to the ground. But those steps don't prepare us for the violent reality.

The fire currently raging in Ventura County (the Thomas fire) and the one in foothill neighborhoods around Sylmar in the San Fernando Valley (the Creek fire) are breathtaking in two ways: the sheer power of wind-driven wildfire to devour landscape, whether it hold scrub brush or mansions, and the fragility of human life in the face of it. Forecasts predict this current round of Santa Ana winds will run with varying intensity through most of the week, which means these two major fires—moving too fast to be contained—have only just begun to destroy property and upend lives. And it means, too, that additional dangerous fires are likely to crop up.

There will be time for assessments after these firestorms subside. Were they natural or human-caused? Would better zoning limit exposure? Do we have sufficient capacity to fight so many fires at once? Are there better building materials we should be using to limit fire damage? For the time being, we must focus on evacuating where prudent, getting firefighters the support they need to protect as much property as possible without endangering themselves needlessly, and hope that the destruction we've already seen stands as the peak of this outbreak, and not just the opening act. October's wine country fires, which killed 44 people, turned Santa Rosa neighborhoods to ash and damaged or destroyed more than $3 billion in property, serve as a sober warning of how bad this can get.

What should make Southern California fearful is that climate change could mean a future of more frequent and more intense wildfires. Today's fires will end, and what we do afterward—assessing how to better prepare, and how and whether to rebuild—will influence the damage from the fires next time.

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Shaking off the weight of holiday memories

By GINA BARRECA
The Hartford Courant

Gina Barreca is an English professor at the University of Connecticut and the author of If You Lean In, Will Men Just Look Down Your Blouse? *and eight other books. She can be reached at www.ginabarreca.com.*

Holidays become harder as we age because, unlike Santa, we're not carrying presents. We're carrying pasts.

We carry not only our pasts but also the pasts of others. The pressure, weight and gravity of those no longer in our lives are usually the most difficult to bear.

I miss my father at Christmas even though he never really liked the whole sentimentalized song-and-dance of the season. He hated Bing Crosby and loathed Andy Williams. My father was not big on guys with grins and crew neck sweaters.

Although he liked Nat King Cole, my father couldn't stand "The Christmas Song." He made fun of the earnest lyrics. "If tiny tots have their eyes all aglow you better check the liquor cabinet," said my old man.

In Brooklyn, we didn't have chestnuts roasting on an open fire; we had uncles barbequing sausage in the freezing backyard. They wanted to get away from the aunts and the tots in the kitchen.

More than four decades after her death, I still wish I could comfort my emotionally fragile mother whose anxiety about the possible inadequacies of her own dinners and gifts overshadowed the pleasures offered to her by snow and the ceremonies of the church. Christmas wasn't easy for her.

Most members of my mother's large family, with whom she had a complex, fraught and competitive relationship, still lived in Canada. We didn't get together very often and when we did, we remembered why. Her sisters were ruthless. Cousin was pitted against cousin:

"Gina's in a school play."

"So? Freda wrote the school play."

Between both sides, I have 51 first cousins. I'm not in touch with them. Twenty years ago I felt guilty about it, but not anymore. I gave them, and myself, a break.

While there were some happy memories from the big family days, the thought of imitating them or attempting to recreate them terrifies me. They were part of my life once. But I have now given myself permission to shelve them, along with the over-sized, black-paged photograph albums where Kodak pictures from those holidays are kept, in a quiet room.

Recent wounds are inevitably more painful. My Facebook friend Marsha Wight Wise said, "Last year I had a get-out-of-Christmas-free pass" because her mother had just died. This year, she fears, will be tougher because, "Right after she died, I was allowed to be sad. This year I think I'm expected to be chipper. I have one husband and three teenage boys. I think I have to be the engineer of Christmas and am responsible for their happiness."

But here's the truth: We are allowed to forgo the festivities if we choose and we all have permission to wave goodbye to rituals that no longer meet our needs. I can send you a note with these words on it if you need to carry a reminder to ward off the guilt.

Seeing a need to "do" the holidays in these terms is what makes the holidays seem like doing hard time. The very idea of meeting someone else's expectations or needs leads some of us to proffer false emotions and empty promises while attempting to sustain a sense of composure more brittle than thin ice.

People don't have to be gone from the planet—or be one of my cousins—to be off the radar. Divorce, disconnection and distance can feel as irrevocable as death. Ask anybody who has experienced a decisive split with a spouse or sibling. Traces of earlier days are easier to tumble over this time of year.

We retrieve old memories the way we bring out old decorations—more out of habit than desire. Perhaps we need to choose more carefully.

Nostalgia, like cheap candy, is sticky and often stale.

So why hasn't the blueprint for the season been updated and upgraded? We're taking Lyft, not a sleigh, to Grandma's house. If Grandma's living over the river it's because she's moved back to the city and bought a co-op with her new partner Pat.

Don't sigh over the golden days of yore. (My father would have said "The golden days of your what?")

Leave the past to the past. Celebrate the here and the now. Open the present.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Trump gives away public lands to special interests

By CHRIS MORRILL
THE SACRAMENTO BEE

President Donald Trump has announced plans to reduce Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments in Utah by 85 percent and 50 percent, respectively. It is the clearest example yet of the Trump administration's intent to offer our most treasured public lands to a handful of mining and fossil fuel companies.

The administration claims that there is insufficient public support for the monument designations, that they hurt the economies of surrounding communities and that they are outside a president's legal authority in the Antiquities Act.

To bolster this argument, the Department of Interior opened a new public comment period on all national monuments, even though each one had already undergone years of public meetings, comments and negotiations with stakeholders. This mendacious process showed just how out of touch and deceitful the Trump administration is. Of the 2.8 million public comments, more than 99 percent supported maintaining or expanding national monuments. The American people spoke loudly about protecting public lands.

The notion that national monuments have a negative economic impact, like so much else with Trump, is not grounded in reality. There is plenty of evidence of the opposite. For example, a study found that in communities surrounding Grand Staircase-Escalante, 44 percent of total private employment is in the tourism industry, personal income rose by 32 percent between 2001 and 2015 and jobs grew by 24 percent.

Opening up public lands for private exploitation doesn't benefit communities economically in any sustained way, but does cause irreparable harm to the land. It gives away public assets and benefits fossil fuel and mining special interests that have the access to the administration.

Finally, the notion that actions to protect public lands taken by former presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama are illegal is a fantasy unsupported by serious legal analysis. Both Republican and Democratic presidents have used the powers of the Antiquities Act to protect large swaths of America's cultural, historical and natural treasures.

The illegal action is actually what Trump did in reducing Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante. The 1906 Antiquities Act does not grant the president the authority to revoke or reduce national monuments, and Congress specifically reserved this right for itself in the 1976 Federal Land Policy and Management Act. Many legal scholars, members of Congress and conservationists have expressed this view to the administration and will vigorously make the case in the federal courts.

The president's actions don't just matter to the Utah residents. California's public lands enjoy broad support and are widely used by different communities. Sportsmen, native tribes, off-highway vehicle owners and environmentalists are putting behind old animosities in favor of effective action to conserve public lands.

While California's public lands may be safe today, Trump's actions are a watershed moment showing that our public lands could be hostage to the whims or capriciousness of whoever is president. That's not worthy of the grandeur of our monuments, or of our democracy.

Chris Morrill is executive director of the California Wilderness Coalition, an Oakland-based statewide conservation group. He can be contacted at cmorrill@calwild.org. He wrote this for the Sacramento Bee.

8 haiku for 8 days of Hanukkah

By JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Today, Dec. 12, is Chanukah (several different spellings). It is a major Jewish holiday celebrating the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem around 167 B.C. This was after three years of fighting the Greek king Antiochus, who forced the Jews to reject their religion and to worship the Greek gods. Under Judas Maccabee they won. These haiku/senryu are how Hanukkah is celebrated today. I have placed a comma between each line to save space. There are traditionally three lines in every haiku. Haiku deal with nature, senryu human nature. Would you like to know, something about Hanukkah, read these haiku:

temple lamp lit, for one night stayed lit for eight, so we remember

first night one candle, light a new candle each night, a blessing each day

Festival of Lights, say 'nas Godol haya Shaum', eight successive days

Judas Maccabee said, a great miracle happened here, Chanukah time

eight branch candle lit, temple rededication, 25 Kislev (date and month)

Hanukkah is eight, candles in the menorah, *gelt, latkes, and song

spin the top now, sing "Sovivon sov sov", *dreidel spin spin spin

menorah aglow, it's a Jewish holiday, Happy Hanukkah.

**gelt is money, latkes are potato pancakes, and a dreidel is a four-sided toy marked with Hebrew letters and spun like a top in a game of chance, played especially by children at Hanukkah.*

The Global Girth of Merry Mirth

Mirth hurled many times around the world
up the Yangtze river where Shanghai's Bund is
past the United Nations flags all unfurled
to Dublin where Wilde wrote De Profundis
fat men famous for their rotundity
jovial, conniving and high fiving
all laughing with great profundity
drinking 'Two Buck Chuck' jumping and jiving
shaking like Santa's bowl full of jelly
happiness dominates their attitude
rolling over laughing from top to bottom
dancing with more jiggles in their belly
leeway given plenty of gratitude
this time around mirth finally got em.

Hagatna, Guam Holiday Haiku

a cool breeze, butterflies follow, along the beach
this is a drinker, I know, puffer fish
porch sweeping, even the geckos, get going
clouds dissipate, old man puzzled, now full moon
massaging my back, a low hanging coconut, evening breeze
belly bloated, he rolls up his t-shirt, fiesta heat.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

SCS Christmas thank you

We have had many wonderful events here at Saipan Community School to celebrate Christmas. Both our concert band and our Elementary Christmas Program proclaimed the coming of Christmas by making a joyful noise and sharing the meaning of Christmas! We have so much to be thankful for. We thank our SCS parents and teachers for their hard work practicing with the children to make these events a success.

The celebration doesn't stop here! Today, Dec. 12, our junior high students will spread Christmas cheer at the Man'amko Center under the Office on Aging in China Town. This is an opportunity to put our words into action, as what the Bible teaches us: to visit, respect, and love the elderly and hurting (James 1:27, Prov. 20:29). This Biblical model of respect for elders is a value we strive to teach at SCS.

Ukulele caroling will continue on Dec. 14 at 6pm, when Saipan Community School students in grade 3 through grade 8 will be at Kanoa Resort for ukulele caroling to share their talents with the community and tourists as they pass by.

Keeping with tradition, on Dec. 17, the Saipan Community Church will be hosting the annual Christmas feast at 4pm to spread the Christmas joy to everyone in the community!

As we draw near to the end of our first semester of classes, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank our families and community for the overwhelmingly positive support during this half of our school year. We have seen growth in our students' academics, a display of their hard work in their performances, and found joy in building a stronger community together. To our parents and guardians, thank you for entrusting us at SCS with your child's education. We see this as a privilege and a responsibility, one we take seriously before God.

We are committed to nurture, love, and pray for your children. We will educate them with excellence. We will help lead them into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and strive for integrity, morality, and a positive work ethic. We will teach them to serve and be responsible citizens for our school, community, and world. We will strive to model and train effective communicators. We are committed to following God's call for our lives and the lives of our students.

I personally am very blessed and proud to be the principal of Saipan Community School! My hope and "Christmas wish" for our community is one full of faith, hope, and love! Merry Christmas!

Amanda June Allen Dunn
Principal, Saipan Community School

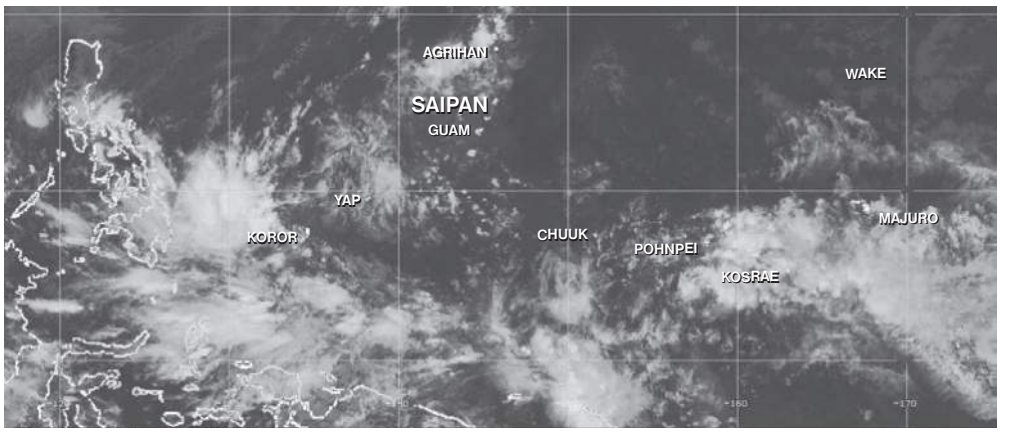
Saipan Community School's Elementary Christmas Program proclaims the coming of Christmas. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼78°	▲87° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:51 AM, MONDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2017
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A few change made to the forecast. Did update winds with new model data. Earlier forecast indicated that scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms were possible for today. Latest model data show decreasing deep layer moisture through the day. Water Vapor imagery hints at decreasing deep layer moisture inching in from the east validating the model projections. With drier air filtering in trimmed the scattered showers from the forecast. Early morning satellite imagery did show isolated cells of convection with a few of these producing lightning. the thunderstorms were outside the local area, but close enough to have to consider them. With thunderstorms in the vicinity kept the mention of thunder in the forecast. Models show that the dry air will continue to push over the area decreasing the shower activity over the Marianas and ending any chance of thunderstorms. An area of trade-wind convergence and recovering deep layer moisture will generate isolated showers and thunderstorms Wednesday night through Friday night.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	85° / 77°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	84° / 80°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	73° / 61°
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	30° / 18°
Hong Kong	Cloudy	66° / 64°
Honolulu	Showers	81° / 69°
London	Mostly Sunny	34° / 34°
Los Angeles	Sunny	83° / 49°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	88° / 77°
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	82° / 59°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	74° / 54°
New York	Showers	47° / 26°
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	45° / 36°
Paris	Showers	43° / 34°
Busan	Sunny	37° / 21°
Rome	Rain	61° / 52°
Salem	Sunny	51° / 30°
San Francisco	Sunny	64° / 44°
Seoul	Sunny	27° / 9°
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	46° / 34°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	47° / 23°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
2:54 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.35
8:51 AM	LOW TIDE	0.54
3:31 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.93
10:29 PM	LOW TIDE	0.45

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:33 AM	5:47 PM
Wednesday	6:33 AM	5:48 PM
Thursday	6:34 AM	5:48 PM
Friday	6:34 AM	5:48 PM
Saturday	6:35 AM	5:49 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	1:20 am	1:42 pm	-
Wednesday	2:10 am	2:22 pm	-
Thursday	2:59 am	3:02 pm	-
Friday	3:48 am	3:42 pm	-
Saturday	4:37 am	4:24 pm	-

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 6, 2017

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA6394	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA6392	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA6391	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA6390	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA6398	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA6396	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA6391	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA6391	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:15pm	7:05pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:10am	6:10am	1, 7
7C3451	4:00am	7:05am	4, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

TW308	2:00am	6:05am	2, 3, 4
OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
TW308	2:35am	6:20am	6, 7
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3403	4:45am	8:30am	Daily
LJ652	3:40am	7:30am	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3401	4:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:30am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:00am	10:25am	1
JD396	4:50pm	8:15pm	4

SAIPAN-NANJING (NKG)

XP889	4:45pm	10:30pm	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	10:55am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:55am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA6394/191	4:15am	9:00am	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	8:10am	7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	1, 3, 4, 6 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6398/193	6:05pm	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	2:00am	5:00am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA6398/159	6:05pm	11:00pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA6393	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA6395	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA6391	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA6390	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA6397	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA6399	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA6390	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA6390	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:30am	3:00pm	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4
7C3452	9:05pm	2:10am+1	3, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	9:30am	3:00pm	Daily
TW307	7:45pm	1:00am+1	1, 2, 3
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
TW307	8:05pm	1:35am+1	5, 6
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
LJ651	9:10pm	2:40am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:10am	3:30pm	4
JD395	10:05pm	5:30am+1	7

NANJING (NKG)-SAIPAN

XP888	9:35pm	4:00am+1	1, 4, 6

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:25pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/6395	12:40am	8:05am	3, 6 via GUM
UA190/6397	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/UA6395	10:05pm	8:05am+1	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA192/6395	10:30pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via ROR-GUM
UA184/6395	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:20pm	12:30am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/6395	11:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, LJ Jin Air, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express, XP XTRA Airways; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

Will misconduct scandals make men wary of women at work?

NEW YORK (AP)—Some women, and men, worry the same climate that's emboldening women to speak up about sexual misconduct could backfire by making some men wary of female colleagues.

Forget private meetings and get-to-know-you dinners. Beware of banter. Think twice before a high-ranking man mentors a young female staffer.

"I have already heard the rumblings of a backlash: 'This is why you shouldn't hire women,'" Facebook chief operating officer Sheryl Sandberg wrote in a recent post .

"So much good is happening to fix workplaces right now. Let's make sure it does not have the unintended consequence of holding women back," said Sandberg, author of the working women's manifesto "Lean In."

Ana Quincoces, a Miami-based attorney and entrepreneur who owns her own food line, says her business and its success involves working mostly with men, and sales and other activities are often concluded over lunch or drinks. Those opportunities, she says, are dwindling, because many of the men she knows through her business "are terrified."

"There's a feeling of this wall that wasn't there that is suddenly up because they don't know what's appropriate anymore — it's disconcerting," Quincoces said. "I feel that they're more careful, more formal in their relationships with co-workers. And I can't say I blame them, because what's happened is pervasive. Every day there's a new accusation."

She said many of the men she knows are now avoiding one-on-one social occasions that were normal in the past.

"This is going to trickle down into all industries. ... It's going to become the new normal," Quincoces said. "It's a good thing because women are not afraid anymore, but on the other side, it's a slippery slope."

AP

In a Feb. 3, 2015, file photo, Facebook chief operating officer Sheryl Sandberg is photographed at the company's headquarters in Menlo Park, Calif.

Americans were already edgy about male-female encounters at work: A New York Times/Morning Consult poll of 5,300 men and women last spring found almost two-thirds thought workers should be extra careful around opposite-sex colleagues, and around a quarter thought private work meetings between men and women were inappropriate.

But in a season of outcry over sexual misconduct, some men are suddenly wondering whether they can compliment a female colleague or ask about her weekend. Even a now-former female adviser to the head of Pennsylvania's Democratic Party suggested on Facebook that men would stop talking to women altogether because of what she portrayed as overblown sexual misconduct claims.

Certain managers are considering whether to make sure they're never alone with a staffer, despite the complications of adding a third person in situations like performance reviews, says Philippe Weiss, who runs the Chicago-based consultancy Seyfarth Shaw at Work.

Philadelphia employment lawyer Jonathan Segal says some men are declaring they'll just shut people out of their offices, rather than risk exchanges that could be misconstrued.

"The avoidance issue is my biggest concern, because the marginalization of women in the business world is at least as big a problem as harassment," Segal says. A recent report involving 222 North American companies found the percentage of women drops from 47 percent at the entry level to 20 percent in the C suite.

Vice President Mike Pence has long said he doesn't have one-on-one meals with any woman except his wife and wants her by his side anywhere alcohol is served, as part of the couple's commitment to prioritizing their marriage. The guidelines have "been a blessing to us," the Republican told Christian Broadcasting Network News in an interview this month.

Employment attorneys caution that it can be problematic to curb interactions with workers because of their gender, if the practice curtails their professional opportunities. W. Brad Johnson, a co-author of a book encouraging male mentors for women, says limiting contact sends a troubling message.

"If I were unwilling to have an individual conversation with you because of your gender, I'm communicating 'you're unreliable; you're a risk,'" says Johnson, a U.S. Naval Academy psychology professor.

Constant complainer is a pain in the butt

YOUR OFFICE COACH

By MARIE G. MCINTYRE
McClatchy-Tribune News Service

Marie G. McIntyre is a workplace coach and the author of Secrets to Winning at Office Politics*. Send in questions and get free coaching tips at http://www.yourofficecoach.com, or follow her on Twitter @ officecoach.*

Q: I am stuck in a very small office with an older colleague who never stops complaining. "Larry" goes on and on about his heavy workload, but when I offer assistance, he criticizes my efforts. Larry also gripes about how our boss doesn't like him. However, if I try to help him figure out why, he immediately rejects my suggestions.

Whenever I'm out of the office, Larry complains about the number of people who were looking for me, although he never seems to know who they were. I would like to tell Larry to just shut up, but that doesn't seem wise. Do you have any advice?

A: Being trapped in a confined space with a chronic complainer would be maddening, so I understand your frustration. But while you will never change Larry's personality, you might be able to modify his behavior.

In attempting to be helpful, you have inadvertently become a player in Larry's griping game. Whenever you listen to complaints, propose solutions to problems, or offer to help with tasks, you are actually rewarding the behavior that is driving you crazy. So it's time to stop participating in these pointless conversations.

When Larry launches into a round of complaints, politely explain that you are unable to talk because you have a lot to do. Then immediately turn away and focus on your work. Should Larry persist, simply repeat "I'm sorry, but I really can't talk now" without making eye contact.

If possible, enhance this separation by arranging your workspace so that your back is to Larry's area. And if you can wear headphones at the office, start plugging them in. Compulsive complainers always want an audience, so if you continue to be unresponsive, Larry will eventually find a more willing listener.

Q: Each year, our company buys a season ticket package for our hometown NFL team. These seats are excellent and extremely costly. Since we are a very small business, every employee can attend one game at company expense. Some games are more desirable than others, so we have a drawing to distribute the tickets.

Because our business is growing, next season we will have more employees than games. Two of our new hires are already season ticket subscribers, so if they win company tickets, they plan to use them and sell the others.

Without company tickets, some long-term employees won't be able to attend any games at all. They feel that season ticket holders should not be allowed to participate in the drawing. What's your opinion?

A: If these tickets are supposed to be a general employee benefit, then everyone should have an equal shot at winning. Despite having their own tickets, your new employees may still want an opportunity to use the "excellent and costly" company seats. If not, they can voluntarily remove their names from the drawing.

As your company continues to grow, you will inevitably have an increasingly smaller percentage of winners and a larger percentage of losers. So perhaps you should consider replacing the NFL experience with a more inclusive gesture. Many things that work well in a very small company are not effective in a larger enterprise.

Deaths from window blinds show need for cord ban, study says

CHICAGO (AP)—Children's injuries and deaths from window blinds have not stalled despite decades of safety concerns, according to a new U.S. study that recommends a complete ban on blinds with cords.

Nearly 17,000 young children were hurt by window blinds between 1990 and 2015, and though most injuries were minor, almost 300 died, the study shows. Most deaths occurred when children became entangled or strangled by the cords.

Injuries continued even after manufacturers adopted voluntary safety standards including warning labels. The industry now has a plan in the works to make cordless blinds the only option at retail stores and online.

The study "should be a huge wake-up call to the public, to the retailers, to the manufacturers and to parents all over the nation to really see how hazardous the cords on the blinds are," said Linda Kaiser of St Louis. Her 1-year-old daughter died in 2002 from strangulation when she pulled a looped hidden cord from a blind and put it around her neck. Kaiser later formed the advocacy group Parents for Window Blind Safety.

While study's data analysis doesn't show an up or down trend in injuries and deaths, the fact that they're still occurring shows that safety standards have been inadequate, said lead author, Dr. Gary Smith, who directs injuries research at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio.

Paul Nathanson, spokesman for the Window Covering Manufacturers Association, said a soon-to-be adopted industry standard drafted with input from the Consumer Product Safety Commission will make corded blinds unavailable in stores and online, although consumers could buy them through custom orders.

The safety commission says windows and window blinds are among the top five hidden hazards in U.S. homes and in a statement, it called the draft standard "a major step forward in protecting children."

That standard is awaiting approval by the American National Standards Institute and is expected to take effect by late 2018, Nathanson said.

Smith said 20 percent are custom blinds and a total ban on corded blinds is needed.

The study was published Monday in the journal Pediatrics

Nation

New evacuations as huge Southern California fire flares up

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A powerful flare-up on the western edge of Southern California's largest and most destructive wildfire sent residents fleeing Sunday, as wind-fanned flames churned through old-growth brush in canyons and along hillsides toward coastal towns.

Crews with help from a fleet water-dropping planes and helicopters saved homes as unpredictable gusts sent the blaze deeper into residential foothill areas northwest of Los Angeles that haven't burned in decades. New evacuations were ordered as the fire sent up an enormous plume near Montecito and Carpinteria, seaside areas in Santa Barbara County that had been under fire threat for days and were now choked with smoke.

"The winds are kind of squirrely right now," said county fire spokesman Mike Eliason. "Some places the smoke is going straight up in the air, and others it's blowing sideways. Depends on what canyon we're in."

The department posted a photo of one residence engulfed in flames. It's unclear whether other structures burned. Thousands of homes and businesses in the county were without power.

The air thick with acrid smoke, even residents of areas not under evacuation orders took the opportunity to leave, fearing another shutdown of U.S. 101, a key coastal highway that was closed intermittently last week. Officials handed out masks to residents who stayed behind in Montecito, the wealthy hillside enclave that's home to celebrities such as Oprah Winfrey, Jeff Bridges and Rob Lowe.

"Our house is under threat of being burned," Ellen DeGeneres tweeted at midday Sunday. "We just had to evacuate our pets. I'm praying for everyone in our community and thankful to all the incredible firefighters."

A few miles to the west, Santa Barbara Zoo was closed to the public and its 500 animals confined to their night quarters all day. The zoo was just outside the evacuation area, but smoke and ash blew through the 30-acre property.

Firefighters made significant progress Saturday on other fronts of the enormous fire that started Dec. 4 in neighboring Ventura County. As containment increased on other major blazes in Los Angeles, Riverside and San Diego counties, resources from those fires were diverted to the Santa Barbara foothills.

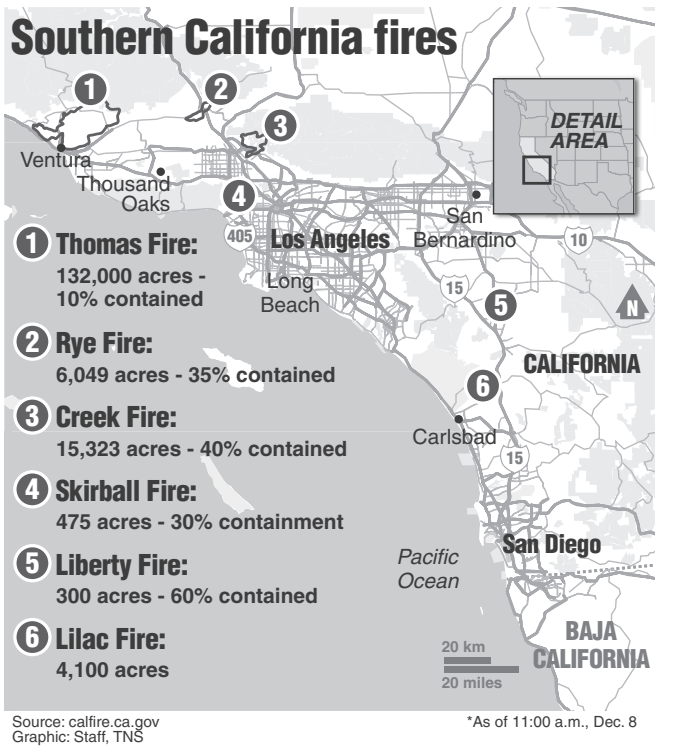
Forecasters said Santa Ana winds that whipped fires across the region last week would continue in some areas at least through Monday.

A lack of rain has officials on edge statewide because of parched conditions and no end in sight to the typical fire season.

"This is the new normal," Gov. Jerry Brown warned Saturday after surveying damage from the deadly Ventura fire. "We're about ready to have firefighting at Christmas. This is very odd and unusual."

High fire risk is expected to last into January and the governor and experts said climate change is making it a year-round threat.

Overall, the fires have destroyed about 800 homes and other buildings, killed dozens of horses and forced more than 200,000 people to flee flames that have burned over 270 square miles (700 square kilometers) since Dec. 4. One death, so far, a 70-year-old woman who crashed her car on an evacuation route, is attributed to the fire in Santa Paula, a small city where the fire began.



Source: calfire.ca.gov
Graphic: Staff, TNS

*As of 11:00 a.m., Dec. 8

AP

Firefighters light backfire while trying to keep a wildfire from jumping Santa Ana Road near Ventura, Calif., on Saturday, Dec. 9, 2017.

Shelby bucks Alabama GOP leaders in voting against Moore

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP)—In his sternest rebuke yet, Alabama Sen. Richard Shelby said repeatedly Sunday his state can "do better" than electing fellow Republican Roy Moore to the U.S. Senate, making clear that a write-in candidate was far preferable to a man accused of sexual misconduct.

Days before the pivotal race, Shelby, who is Alabama's senior senator, said he had already cast an absentee ballot for another, unspecified Republican, even as other prominent state Republicans fell in line behind Moore.

Moore faces Democrat Doug Jones in the special election Tuesday to replace Jeff Sessions, now the U.S. attorney general.

"I couldn't vote for Roy Moore. I didn't vote for Roy Moore. But I wrote in a distinguished Republican name. And I think a lot of people could do that," Shelby told CNN's "State of the Union."

"The state of Alabama deserves better," he said.

"There's a lot of smoke," Shelby said of Moore and his accusers. "Got to be some fire somewhere."

The accusations against Moore have left many GOP voters and leaders in a quandary. Voters face the decision of whether to vote for Moore, accused of sexual misconduct with teenagers decades ago when he was a county prosecutor, or sending Jones to Washington, which would narrow the GOP's already precarious majority in the Senate.

They also could write in a name on their ballots or simply stay home. Meanwhile, most GOP politicians in the state must run for re-election next year — where they will face Moore's enthusiastic voting base at the polls.

Shelby said allegations that Moore had molested a 14-year-girl in particular were a "tipping point" in disqualifying him. His latest comments cast fresh doubt on a former judge that President Donald Trump and most Republican leaders in Alabama are backing to help maintain the party's narrow 52-48 majority in the Senate.

Shelby's outspokenness against a man who could become his colleague was the exception rather than the rule.

"I have stated both publicly and privately over the last month that unless these allegations were proven to be true I would continue to plan to vote for the Republican nominee, Judge Roy Moore," Alabama Secretary of State John Merrill wrote in a text message to The Associated Press. "I have already cast my absentee ballot and I voted for Judge Moore."

The AP tried to find out how Republican leaders from Alabama plan to vote. Most officeholders or their staffs responded, while others have publicly stated their plans during public appearances or to other media outlets.

ACROSS THE NATION

Mom who drank on night of baby's death to be sentenced

BELFAST, Maine (AP)—A Maine woman who told jurors that she drank multiple shots of liquor and smoked marijuana the night of her infant son's death is due to be sentenced this week. Thirty-two-year-old Miranda Hopkins will appear in court on Wednesday in Belfast. The Troy resident says she doesn't know how 7-week-old Jaxson died in January, but she previously told police that one of her two autistic sons may have been responsible. Police say Hopkins had been drinking whisky and told investigators that she must have "blacked out." She said she woke up to find her baby cold and "beat to hell." The baby's cause of death was listed as blunt force head injuries.

Driver rescued from car quickly sinking into icy pond

WINCHENDON, Mass. (AP)—A driver whose car plunged into an icy Massachusetts pond has been rescued from the frigid water. The Winchendon Fire Department says a man was plowing a parking lot in the town on Sunday morning when he saw the car leave a roadway and enter Hunts Pond. The man called 911, telling dispatchers the car was still in the water with the driver inside. The fire department says the driver extricated himself and sat on the roof of the car, which was in about 8 to 10 feet (2.5 to 3 meters) of water. A fire lieutenant threw a rope to the driver as the car was quickly sinking. The man was instructed to tie the rope around himself before crews pulled him safely to shore. He was unhurt.

Plane crash on Molokai kills 2 people

HONOLULU (AP)—Maui fire officials say two people have died in a plane crash on Molokai, a Hawaiian island located between Oahu and Maui. Hawaii News Now reports that the plane crashed Sunday afternoon. Federal Aviation Administration spokesman Allen Kenitzer says the plane crashed due to "unknown circumstances" while on its way to the Molokai Airport. Kentizer says at least two people were aboard the plane when it crashed about 4 miles (6 kilometers) west of the airport. Officials were notified by the Molokai air traffic control tower that communication with the plane was lost. The Maui Fire Department, Federal Aviation Administration and National Transportation Safety Board are investigating the crash.

Asia

2 kiwi birds rare bright spot in grim extinction report

TOKYO (AP)—Two types of New Zealand kiwi birds are a rare bright spot in a mostly grim assessment of global species at risk of extinction.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature upgraded the Okarito kiwi and the Northern Brown kiwi from endangered to vulnerable thanks to New Zealand's progress in controlling predators like stoats and cats.

But the conservation group's latest update of its Red List of endangered species, issued Tuesday, mostly reported grave threats to animals and plants due to loss of habitat and unsustainable farming and fisheries practices.

The group said the Irrawaddy dolphin and finless porpoise that roam coastlines of Southeast Asia are now designated as endangered, imperiled by entanglement in fishing nets and other human activities.

Gillnets used on the Mekong and in other major waterways "hang like curtains of death across the river and entrap everything in the stream," said Craig Hilton-Taylor, head of the Red List's global species program.

Some 91,523 out of nearly 1.9 million described species have been assessed for the Red List, of which 25,821 are threatened, 866 are extinct and 69 extinct in the wild. The IUCN describes 11,783 species as vulnerable, 8,455 as endangered and 5,583 critically endangered.

The IUCN is made up of government and non-government experts whose scientific assessments of the risks to species are subject to independent reviews and are provided to help guide decisions on conservation efforts. The Red List, which it calls a "Barometer of Life," identifies which local species are at risk of extinction.

The organization aims to increase the number of assessed species to 160,000, said Jane Smart, global director of its biodiversity conservation program.

The total number of species is unknown but is thought to be as many as 20 million, many of them microorganisms.

Behind the numbers are life-and-death struggles for survival as human populations grow and industrialize and habitats are transformed by global warming.

Australia's Western Ringtail possum has slipped from vulnerable to critically endangered, the IUCN said, as its population plunged by 80 percent over the past decade.

Once widespread in peppermint and eucalyptus forests of Western Australia, it now has only a few fragmented habitats and is prone to heat stress at temperatures above 35 C (95 F) that are becoming increasingly common where it lives.

The group said three reptile species on Christmas Island, also in Australia, had gone extinct in the wild: the Whiptail skink, the Blue-tailed skink and Lister's gecko. The group said the as yet unexplained losses of reptiles could result from disease or infestations of the yellow crazy ant, which is listed by the IUCN and Global Invasive Species Database as one of the 100 worst invasive species. The creature has wreaked havoc on Christmas Island, devouring the famous endemic red crabs that were a key part of its ecosystem.

Apart from many animal species, the IUCN said many wild crops, such as wild wheat, rice and yam, face threats from overgrazing, use of herbicides and urbanization. Such wild plants are crucial food sources and also play a critical role in the genetic diversity of domesticated food crops.

Many conservationists view the current era as the "sixth extinction," after previous ones that wiped out the dinosaurs and other creatures. Much of today's losses of species stem from human factors, which also means that human efforts can help improve the situation.

The baiji, a kind of dolphin native to the Yangtze river in China, is thought to be extinct, but some findings have raised hopes it might not be. Experts are now surveying the river in hopes of a sighting.

The kiwi has gained ground thanks to a New Zealand campaign to rid its islands of predators such as rats, possums and stoats that have helped kill off more than 40 unique species of New Zealand birds.

The number of Okarito kiwi has risen from 160 in 1995 to 400-450 now, and Northern Brown kiwi numbers are also climbing, the IUCN said.

The IUCN reported its findings in Tokyo to reflect support from Toyota Motor Corp., which helps fund species assessments. It said a third of 46 newly assessed endemic species of lizards and snakes in Japan were threatened by factors such as habitat loss, collection for pet stores and invasive species such as Indian peacocks.

AP

This undated photo released by International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) shows a Northern brown kiwi in New Zealand. Global conservation group IUCN's update issued Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2017, mostly includes news of grave threats to many species, much of it caused due to loss of habitat and unsustainable farming and fisheries practices.

ASIAN BRIEFS

S. Korea imposes new sanctions on N. Korea

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea added several North Korean groups and individuals to its sanctions list Monday in a largely symbolic move that is part of efforts to cut off funding for the North's weapons programs. The government said those added were 20 North Korean groups, including several banks and companies, and 12 individuals. Seoul is among the first to respond to North Korea's Nov. 29 missile launch with fresh sanctions. While the move is largely symbolic because all transactions between two Koreas have been banned for years, the government said it hopes its move will prompt the international community to do likewise. The measure will "remind the international community of the risks of doing transactions with the groups and individuals," Baek Tae-hyun, South Korea's Unification Ministry spokesman, said during a media briefing. The blacklist includes Rason International Commercial Bank and Korea Zinc Industrial Group. Individuals are North Korean officials who work for the country's banks or companies based in China, Russia, Vietnam and Namibia.U.S. President Donald Trump's U.N. ambassador has been urging the world to cut trade and diplomatic ties with Pyongyang.

Thousands of Indonesians rally at US Embassy over Jerusalem

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—About 10,000 people rallied Sunday outside the U.S. Embassy in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta to denounce President Donald Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Similar protests, mostly organized by the Islamist Prosperous Justice Party, or PKS, also were held in many other cities in Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim country. The protests were the third and biggest in Indonesia since Trump's decision on Thursday. In the capital, protesters carried banners reading "U.S. Embassy, Get Out from Al Quds," ''Free Jerusalem and Palestinians" and "We are with the Palestinians." Al-Quds is the Arabic name for Jerusalem. Wearing traditional Islamic white robes, the protesters also unfurled Indonesian and Palestinian flags. A written statement from PKS described Trump's decision as "a form of humiliation and provocation against Muslims all over the world." It said similar and simultaneous protests also were held Sunday in at least 10 provincial capitals and cities across Indonesia. Earlier in the day, another group, calling itself Indonesia's Volunteers Society, held a similar rally in Jakarta, hundreds of meters (yards) from the embassy.Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo has strongly condemned Trump's move, which he described as a violation of U.N. resolutions.Indonesia has long been a strong supporter of Palestinians and has no diplomatic ties with Israel.

Alliance of communist parties leading poll results in Nepal

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP)—An alliance of two major communist parties is leading parliamentary election results in Nepal and could be forming the next government in the Himalayan nation.

According to preliminary results released by Nepal's Election Commission on Saturday, the alliance of Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist Leninist) and Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Center) has won 19 seats in the National Assembly and is leading in 81 other constituencies.

In the assembly, 165 seats are directly elected and 110 are allocated to parties based on proportional representation.

The Nepal Congress, which was the largest party in the last election, has so far won only three seats.

"This is a clear indication that the Left alliance will get more than majority votes needed to form a government," said Sudheer Sharma, editor of the popular Kantipur newspaper.

Sharma said the reason for the alliance doing so well was because their votes were not divided as was the case in past elections. They also promised a stable government for the next five years, Sharma said.

Nepal has had 10 prime ministers in the past 11 years. The political instability has been blamed for slow progress in Nepal, one of the world's poorest countries. Many voters said they were eager for help in pressing the government to reconstruct hundreds of thousands of homes toppled in a devastating 2015 earthquake that killed 9,000 people. So far, less than 4 percent have been rebuilt.

"Now that there is likely to be a strong government, I am hopeful there will be development of the country," said Susil Sah, a businessman who was standing outside the City Hall in Kathmandu, where votes were still being counted.

The former rebels of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Center) fought government troops between 1996 and 2006, when they entered a U.N.-monitored peace deal and joined mainstream politics. They and their coalition partners also promised to work for good relations with both of Nepal's giant neighbors India and China.

Officials said final results could take days. The mostly peaceful elections were held in two phases—the northern half of the country voted on Nov. 26 and the rest on Thursday.

It was the first election for seven provincial assemblies established under the constitution adopted in 2015. Election officials estimated turnout at 67 percent among the 15 million eligible voters.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the elections marked "a historic moment for Nepal in implementing its federal structure as enshrined in the 2015 Constitution."

Nepal's slow path to democracy began in 2006, when protesters forced the king to give up his rule. Two years later, Nepal officially abolished the centuries-old monarchy and decided that a federal system would best deliver services to all corners of the nation.

But bickering among political parties delayed until 2015 the implementation of the new constitution, which declared Nepal a republic.

World

US Nobel laureate worries politics could undermine science

STOCKHOLM (AP)—An American researcher who shared this year's Nobel Prize for medicine bluntly criticized political developments at home in his address at the awards' gala banquet Sunday night.

Michael Rosbash, who was honored for his work on circadian rhythms — commonly called the body clock — expressed concern that U.S. government support such as that received by him and colleagues Jeffrey Hall and Michael Young is endangered.

"We benefited from an enlightened period in the postwar United States. Our National Institutes of Health have enthusiastically and generously supported basic research ... (but) the current climate in the U.S. is a warning that continued support cannot be taken for granted," he said in a short speech at the ornate city hall in Stockholm.

The 2018 federal budget proposed by President Donald Trump calls for cutting science funding by billions of dollars

"Also in danger is the pluralistic America into which all three of us of born were born and raised after World War II," Rosbash said. "Immigrants and foreigners have always been an indispensable part of our country, including its great record in scientific research."

AP

Michael Rosbash, laureate in Medicine 2017 delivers a speech, during the Nobel banquet in the City Hall, in Stockholm, Sunday, Dec. 10, 2017.

Literature laureate Kazuo Ishiguro of Britain expressed concern about increasing tensions between social factions.

"We live today in a time of growing tribal enmities of communities fracturing into bitterly opposed groups," said Ishiguro, who was born in Japan.

He said Nobel prizes can counterbalance such animosity.

"The pride we feel when someone from our nation wins a Nobel prize is different from the one we feel witnessing one of our athletes winning an Olympic medal. We don't feel the pride of our tribe demonstrating superiority over other tribes. Rather it's the pride that from knowing that one of us has made a significant contribution to our common human endeavor," he said.

In the Norwegian capital of Oslo, a survivor of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima compared her struggle to survive in 1945 to the objectives of the group awarded this year's Nobel's Peace Prize.

Setsuko Thurlow, who was 13 when the U.S. bomb devastated her Japanese city during the final weeks of World War II, spoke as a leading activist with the Nobel-winning International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

Thurlow said the Hiroshima blast left her buried under the rubble, but she was able to see light and crawl to safety. In the same way, the campaign to which she belongs is a driving force behind an international treaty to ban nuclear weapons, she said after ICAN received the Nobel prize it won in October.

"Our light now is the ban treaty," Thurlow said. "I repeat those words that I heard called to me in the ruins of Hiroshima: 'Don't give up. Keep pushing. See the light? Crawl toward it.'"

The treaty has been signed by 56 countries — none of them nuclear powers — and ratified by only three. To become binding it requires ratification by 50 countries.

ICAN Executive Director Beatrice Fihn, who accepted the prize along with Thurlow, said that while the treaty is far from ratification "now, at long last, we have an unequivocal norm against nuclear weapons."

"This is the way forward. There is only one way to prevent the use of nuclear weapons — prohibit and eliminate them," Fihn said.

The prize winners were announced in October. All except the peace prize were awarded in Sweden on Sunday.

The other laureates were American Richard Thaler for his work in behavioral economics; American physicists Kip Thorne, Rainer Weiss and Barry Barish for confirming the existence of gravity waves; and Jacques Dubochet of Switzerland, American Joachim Frank and Richard Henderson of the United Kingdom for advances in electron microscopy.

American diplomat: US looks to counter Iran in post-war Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP)—As Iraq emerges from three years of war with the Islamic State group, the U.S. is looking to roll back the influence of neighboring Iran and help the central government resolve its dispute with the Kurdish region, the American envoy to the country told The Associated Press.

U.S. Ambassador Douglas Silliman took up his post in Baghdad in September 2016, just weeks before the start of the operation to retake the northern city of Mosul. With IS now driven out of all the territory it once held and Iraq's declaration that the war against the extremists is over, he says Washington is focused on keeping the peace and rebuilding, and sees Iran's influence as a problem.

"Iran simply does not respect the sovereignty of its neighbors," Silliman said. "The Iranians have — to some extent — assisted the government of Iraq in defeating ISIS," he said, using an alternative acronym for IS. "But frankly I have not seen the Iranians donating money for humanitarian assistance, I have not seen them contributing to the U.N. stabilization program."

Iran gained major influence in Iraq after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion toppled Saddam Hussein's Sunni-led dictatorship and empowered the country's Shiite majority.

When IS swept across northern and central Iraq in the summer of 2014, Iran-backed militias mobilized in the country's defense, providing a bulwark in many areas while the beleaguered armed forces were rebuilt. The now state-sanctioned paramilitaries, known as the Popular Mobilization Forces, consist of tens of thousands of mostly Shiite fighters deployed across the country. Victories against IS have made their leaders increasingly powerful.

The Trump administration has called for the paramilitary forces to disband after the IS fight is complete. It has also vowed to take a much tougher line on Iran, threatening to pull the U.S. out of the landmark 2015 nuclear agreement and levying sanctions on Iran's powerful Revolutionary Guard.

Iraq is meanwhile seeking external support for reconstruction after the war, which the government says caused an estimated $100 billion in damage. Some 3 million Iraqis are still displaced, months after major fighting ended.

The Trump administration has made clear that the $14.3 billion military campaign against IS will not be replaced with a similarly funded reconstruction effort. International aid organizations are instead looking to wealthy Gulf states.

"Iraq is coming out of a difficult period where there had been a lot of economic destruction, lots of social disruption and we think that it is important for Iraq to have good, positive relationships with all of its neighbors, and Iran is included in that," Silliman said.

He said the U.S. was encouraged by recent Iraqi efforts to reach out to Saudi Arabia and Jordan, allies that it hopes will play a bigger role in the country going forward.

The U.S. is also hoping to help calm tensions between the central government and the northern Kurdish region following a September independence referendum that was rejected by Baghdad. Federal forces clashed with Kurdish fighters in October as Baghdad retook disputed territories that the Kurds had seized from IS.

World leaders congratulate Iraq on defeating IS

BAGHDAD (AP)—World leaders congratulated Iraq Sunday following the prime minister's declaration of victory over the Islamic State group. Saudi Arabia says the achievement is a big victory against terrorism in the region and the United Kingdom applauded Iraq's security forces "for their courage and sacrifice."

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi declared victory in the more than three year fight against IS in a national address aired on Iraqi state television Saturday evening.

Sunday was an official holiday in Iraq. A military parade attended by al-Abadi was held inside Baghdad's fortified Green Zone — a district that houses most of Iraq's government buildings and foreign embassies. In the evening, the capital's skies filled with fireworks.

"Daesh no longer hold significant territory in Iraq or Syria," United Kingdom Prime Minister Theresa May said according to an official statement released by her office. "This signals a new chapter towards a more peaceful, prosperous country."

In Saudi Arabia's statement Sunday, the kingdom reiterated Saudi support for Iraq.

Several thousand Saudis are believed to have joined the ranks of Sunni extremist groups to fight in Iraq and Syria. However, the kingdom has also been a target of multiple attacks claimed by IS and carried out by local affiliates.

The top U.S.-led coalition commander U.S. Lt. Gen. Paul E. Funk II pledged that coalition forces would continue to support Iraq after the conventional military fight against IS is concluded.

"Much work remains, and we will continue to work by, with and through our Iraqi partners to ensure the enduring defeat of Daesh and prevent its ability to threaten civilization, regionally and globally," Funk said in a statement released by the coalition Sunday. Daesh is an Arabic acronym for IS.

Iraqi forces retook the last IS strongholds in Iraq's western deserts earlier Saturday and secured the country's border with Syria.

IS fighters overran nearly a third of Iraqi territory, including Mosul, the country's second largest city and Tikrit, the capital of Iraq's central Salahuddin province in the summer of 2014. The following year, IS fighters also overran Anbar's provincial capital of Ramadi.

Over the past 3 ½ half years, Iraqi ground forces closely backed by the U.S.-led coalition and mostly Shiite paramilitary forces backed by Iran have slowly retaken all of that territory.

Focus

Israeli, French leaders tangle over US Jerusalem decision

AP
Palestinians clash with Israeli troops following a protest against U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, in the West Bank City of Nablus, Sunday, Dec. 10, 2017.

By JOSEF FEDERMAN and TIA GOLDENBERG
ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERUSALEM (AP)—The French and Israeli leaders sparred verbally Sunday over the U.S. decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital, while new violence rippled across the region following the move by U.S. President Donald Trump.

In Jerusalem, a Palestinian stabbed an Israeli security guard, seriously wounding him in the first attack in the volatile city since Trump's pronouncement Wednesday. In Beirut, scores of Lebanese and Palestinian demonstrators clashed with security forces outside the heavily guarded U.S. Embassy, and Arab foreign ministers meeting in Cairo demanded that the United States rescind the decision.

The move upended decades of U.S. policy, and a longstanding international consensus, that the fate of Jerusalem be decided in negotiations. Israeli and Palestinian claims to the city's eastern sector form the emotional core of their conflict, and Trump's announcement was seen as siding with the Israelis and has drawn wide international criticism.

At a meeting in Paris with Israel's visiting prime minister, French President Emmanuel Macron condemned recent violence against Israelis. But he also expressed "disapproval" of Trump's decision, calling it "dangerous for peace."

"It doesn't seem to serve, in the short term, the cause of Israel's security and the Israelis themselves," Macron said.

He urged Israel to freeze its construction of settlements on occupied lands and called for other confidence-building measures toward the Palestinians.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has called Trump's decision "historic," said Israel has maintained its capital in the city for 70 years and the Jewish connection to Jerusalem goes back 3,000 years.

"Paris is the capital of France, Jerusalem is the capital of Israel," he said. "We respect your history and your choices. And we know that as friends, you respect ours."

"I think the sooner the Palestinians come to grips with this reality, the sooner we move toward peace," he added.

The exchange between the two allies set the stage for what could be a tense meeting Monday for Netanyahu with European Union foreign ministers in Brussels. The Jerusalem issue and the moribund peace process are expected to be high on the agenda.

Last week, EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini warned that Trump's decision "has the potential to send us backward to even darker times than the one we are already living in."

She also warned that Trump's "move could diminish the potential role that the United States could play in the region and create more confusion around this."

The meeting could be a precursor for what seems to be an emerging rift between Israel and the U.S. on one side, and Europe and the Palestinians on the other.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has said Trump's decision has in effect disqualified the U.S. from continuing in its role as the traditional mediator of peace talks. The Palestinians have spent recent days trying to rally Arab and broader international opposition to the decision.

After Abbas political adviser Majdi Khaldi said Saturday that the Palestinian leader won't meet with Vice President Mike Pence when he visits the region this month, a spokeswoman for Pence said Sunday it was "unfortunate that the Palestinian Authority is walking away again from an opportunity to discuss the future of the region."

EU leaders, including Macron, have reiterated support for establishing an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel. Trump has said he would support the idea if both sides endorse it — effectively giving Israel a veto over any peace proposal. Netanyahu's government is dominated by opponents to Palestinian independence. Trump's Middle East team, headed by his son-in-law Jared Kushner, has been working for months on a peace plan but has not yet released it.

Israel captured east Jerusalem from Jordan in the 1967 Middle East war and annexed the area to its capital in a move that was not internationally recognized. The Palestinians claim east Jerusalem as the capital of a future state, along with the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

East Jerusalem is home to Judaism's most sacred site, as well as key holy places for Christians and Muslims. These conflicting claims have erupted into deadly bloodshed in the past.

A senior U.S. official appealed to world leaders, especially in the Middle East, to calm regional tensions.

Acting Assistant Secretary of State David Satterfield told Arab journalists that Trump's pronouncement was merely a "recognition of simple reality" that Israel's government already is in Jerusalem.

He said the U.S. was not prejudging final-status negotiations about the city's final borders and expressed hope that world leaders understand the U.S. is committed to moving forward with a peace plan he expects to be unveiled in the new year.

"This is a question of choice: Do leaders choose to speak to their peoples, to their regions in terms that reflect reality or in terms that incite or inflame?" he said. "We hope it's the former."

The Palestinians staged three "days of rage" after Trump's dramatic announcement, with clashes breaking out in flashpoints across the West Bank, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, and Gaza militants firing rockets into Israel. Four people in Gaza were killed. In the West Bank, there were dozens of injuries, but no deaths.

There were indications that Sunday's stabbing at the Jerusalem bus station was motivated by Trump's move, although police did not officially confirm it.

They said the attacker was a 24-year-old Palestinian from the West Bank city of Nablus. Israeli media identified him as Yassin Abu al-Qarah, who posted on his Facebook page in recent days about Jerusalem, saying "our blood is devoted" to the holy city. Comments on his profile called him a hero for the alleged attack.

Police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said the guard sustained a serious wound to his upper body and the attacker was apprehended.

Palestinian youths also clashed in the West Bank city of Bethlehem, hurling stones at Israeli soldiers, who fired back with rubber bullets and tear gas.

In Beirut, Lebanese security forces broke up the protest outside the U.S. Embassy after demonstrators pelted them with stones. After a rowdy start, the protest drew several hundred people and became more peaceful, with demonstrators chanting and singing.

Clashes resumed in the afternoon, with security forces chasing and arresting a handful of protesters and lobbing tear gas. Lebanon is home to 450,000 Palestinian refugees, nearly 10 percent of the population.

In a resolution long on rhetoric but short on concrete actions, Arab foreign ministers demanded the recognition decision be rescinded and urged the U.N. Security Council to adopt a resolution condemning Trump's decision. They acknowledged that Washington would most likely veto it.

If the U.S. vetoes such a resolution, the Arabs would seek a similar resolution in the U.N. General Assembly, Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad Malki told a news conference in Cairo.

With few options for the Palestinians, and the Arab world preoccupied by other crises, Arab willingness to press the issue may be limited. In Paris, Netanyahu talked about his quiet but improving relations with Arab countries that look to Israel as an ally against Iran.

"There is in this a blessing, because this could help pave the way to an ultimate peace between us and our Palestinian neighbors and between us and the rest of the Arab world," he said.

Nikki Haley, the U.S. ambassador to the U.N., defended Trump's move.

"For those who want to say this is a bad idea, I'll tell you: Ask us five or 10 years from now if you still think it's a bad idea. Because I really do think this is going to move the ball in the peace process," she told CNN's "State of the Union."

Overdrive

Ford Mustang GT coupe is a worthy competitor

By CHARLES FLEMING
LOS ANGELES TIMES

The 2018 5.0L Mustang is the latest in a long line of legendary V8s. TNS

If you're interested in the new Mustang, and you're going to take a test drive — do as I say, and not as I do: Drive the little one first and the big one second.

I joined the Ford folks in Malibu on a cool November morning for an introduction to the 2018 Mustang family. Ford had taken over Calamigos Ranch and had brought a dozen pony cars to the mountains for test drives.

On hand were several variations of the high-powered GT Coupe model, but fewer of the entry-level Ecoboost Coupe. I'd have preferred to start with the Ecoboost, but when none was available, I slid behind the wheel of a GT Coupe and sped away.

The air was crisp and the roads were clear. The car filled with the smell of sage and I spun the GT Coupe onto Latigo Canyon Road.

It's a tight, technical road that drops from Kanan Dume Road to Pacific Coast Highway through a series of sharp turns. I took it slow, knowing my limitations, and let the Mustang find its own pace.

The car was outfitted with the 5-liter, V-8 engine, mated to Ford's relatively new 10-speed transmission. Using the paddle shifters, in manual mode, and enjoying the comfortingly responsive feel of the brakes, I urged the coupe into the corners and found it deliciously sharp and sticky.

The stiff suspension, improved by the special springs, stabilizer bars and damping system — options on this vehicle as part of the MagneRide and GT Performance packages — kept the Michelin PS4 tires glued to the pavement.

The engine under the Mustang hood was exhilarating, and the horsepower felt like an invitation for horseplay. When I saw the sign reading, "Slide Area," I did my best, but try as I might I couldn't get the back end to bust loose.

Turning north onto PCH I found the Coupe could also be quiet and contained. The front seats, I realized, were snug and comfortable. The back seats, such as they are, might be fine for storage but wouldn't be of much use for passengers. The two cup holders upfront were a nod to daily driver needs.

But I wasn't in the mood for daily driving. Turning onto Kanan Dume, I shifted into Sport mode, which uncorked the exhaust, and let the engine's rumble turn into a roar. For the last quarter of the drive I rolled the windows down and soaked up the sound.

Half an hour later, I was in a similar GT Coupe, but this time equipped with Ford's six-speed manual gearbox and painted a dazzling color known as Orange Fury. The stick shift heightened my engagement, and made me forget the pleasures of the 10-speed automatic.

I saw that, in addition to Sport mode, I was also offered Sport Plus, Snow/Wet, Track and Drag Strip options — the last two identified on the dashboard with crash helmet icons. (The dashboard also featured a speedometer marked Ground Speed, in case you thought you were airborne, and a tachometer marked Revolutions Per Minute, in case you forgot what RPM stood for.)

Hoping to be a good guest, and to be invited back to the next Ford event, I eschewed Track and Drag Strip, and contented myself with Sport Plus for a few miles along Mulholland Highway.

It was lovely driving. Working the crisp gearbox, and enjoying the same responsive brakes, stiff suspension and sticky tires, I eyed the cup holders and wondered how long I'd be able to use the manual as a daily driver before winding up with latte in my lap.

The morning burned away, and with it my chance to drive the Ecoboost version. A couple of weeks passed before I was able to borrow one from Ford, and give it a few days' worth of test driving.

Unfairly, I was disappointed.

The Mustang with the smaller engine and the automatic transmission (a $1,585 upgrade from the 6-speed manual on these Mustangs) felt feeble and hesitant compared with its bigger displacement brothers.

I wasn't just imagining things. The turbocharged 2.3-liter, 4-cylinder engine makes a respectable 310 horsepower and 350 pound-feet of torque. But the 5-liter, V-8 numbers are 460 horsepower and 420 pound-feet. (The top of the line Shelby GTs go further, with 526 horsepower and 429 pound-feet of torque.)

The smaller-bore pony car seemed more interested in maximizing fuel economy than in having an interesting driving experience. In Normal, automatic transmission mode, under normal acceleration, the car fell into fourth, fifth or even sixth gear before it got to the end of the block. In Sport mode, using the paddle shifters, it was a little bit less anemic. But the paddle shift experience felt slurring, imprecise and lacking the sharpness I had enjoyed on the GT Coupe.

I also found that, because the driving was less thrilling, I was a little bit more aware of the environment. And I didn't like the environment as much in the smaller car as I had in the bigger engine version — though the environments were exactly the same.

Undistracted by the amazing horsepower and handling, I began to notice that the visibility was less than ideal and that the driver ergonomics weren't quite right. No matter how many times I adjusted the seats and the steering wheel I couldn't quite find exactly the right position.

In other words, I should've had a V-8. Or tested the cars in the opposite order.

Either way, the new Mustangs continue to represent good sports car bargains for buy-American car shoppers. The 2.3-liter Mustang Coupe Premiums start at $31,500; the GT Coupe Premiums begin at $39,995.

Considering the competition, those are good reasons to pony up on a Mustang.

NUTS & BOLTS

2018 Ford Mustang Ecoboost and GT Coupe Premiums

- Times' take: Classic coupes at reasonable rates
- Highs: Timeless styling, 21st century power and handling
- Lows: Driver ergonomics and visibility issues
- Vehicle type: Four-door, four-passenger coupes
- Base price: $31,500 / $39,995
- Price as tested: $42,270 / $53,160
- Powertrain: 2.3-liter four-cylinder gasoline engine / 5-liter V-8 gasoline engine
- Transmission: 10-speed automatic / 6-speed manual
- Horsepower: 310 / 460
- Torque: 350 pound feet / 420 pound feet
- EPA fuel economy rating: 21 mpg city / 32 highway / 26 combined on 2.3-liter engine; 16 mpg city / 25 highway / 206 combined on 5-liter engine

UNDER THE HOOD

Idle car batteries can drain quickly

Q: We went on vacation for 16 days and left my 2017 Malibu at a nearby long-term parking lot. When we got back, we discovered the car battery was dead. I was told by OnStar and the dealer that the Malibu battery can go into hibernation after 10 days. After 15 days, it is possible to completely drain. This doesn't sound right because there could be many occasions where my car won't be driven for 2 weeks. Is this a defect? I can't believe a car battery can completely go dead in 2 weeks. They explained that there are so many electronics being maintained while the car is parked, that the battery will slowly drain and it needs to be started during that time to keep it charged. I towed the car to the dealer the next day and they recharged the battery and it is running normally. I worry on my next vacation or business trip I will return to a dead battery, again. Is the only option to disconnect the battery while away on vacation for two weeks or more? Is this normal for new cars?

–– Terence C.

A: This is tough one because I'm not sure what the outside temperature may have been as this issue arose, and how far you typically drive during a standard trip. When a vehicle is parked, a tiny quantity of electricity is consumed to maintain memories such as the clock, radio stations, emissions component and system test results, user selected settings, and other functions. Your body control module is supposed to go to sleep after being parked for a while, but also needs to be ready to spring into action the instant a door handle is pulled. I wonder if the rumble of the airport could be causing occasional awakenings.

A typical vehicle's parasitic drain may be about 30 milliamps. Depending on the battery's state of charge and condition, and outside temperature, and the number and type of control modules in use, battery standby time is perhaps 15 to 25 days. Cold weather degrades battery performance and increases starting effort, taking folks to the lower end of the range. Short trips may also not allow sufficient charging time to return the battery to a full state of charge before shut-off.

It's possible your Malibu has an unacceptable parasitic drain, perhaps due to a module failing to go to sleep, or the "afterblow" climate control function being selected (runs the HVAC blower intermittently after shut-off to mitigate mold odors) — this knocks the battery a bit. Parasitic drain can be tested, under the new car warranty, if the dealer is willing to expend the effort. Hopefully if there was a fault, it would be active at the time of testing, and confirmed.

There is some confusion or misinformation regarding your mention of "hibernation." It's your 4G LTE-based 10th-generation OnStar hardware that goes into hibernation after 10 days, not the battery, and that reduces parasitic drain. They are correct about the other information.

For folks who may be parking their cars and trucks beyond a week, a portable solar panel such as the Coleman 3.5 watt solar 12V battery trickle charger with OBD-II connector can keep the battery full if placed on the dash, oriented in a sunny direction. I mentioned this particular unit because it has a connector that plugs into a 1996 or newer vehicle's data connector, which is "hot at all times", as opposed to a typical solar panel that plugs into the accessory socket, which may not be active on many vehicles when parked. Don't disconnect the battery! There are too many things that need to relearn behavior and it's inconvenient to re-enter needed information.

By BRAD BERGHOLDT
Tribune News Service

Brad Bergholdt is an automotive technology instructor at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. Readers may send him email at bradbergholdt@gmail.com; he cannot make personal replies.

Life & Style

Christmas special showcases dance student performances

Group C dancers of the Glushko's Academy perform a number during the annual Glushko Academy Christmas Concert at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi Purpose Center on Sunday.
KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Glushko's Dance Academy hosted its annual Christmas concert last night with 50 of Anna Glushko's students rocking the stage of the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.

According to Glushko, the school's founder, her students have been preparing tirelessly since August to perfect their performances.

"We practiced hard…and we put a lot of effort into having a nice performance …we started in August to prepare for [the] December [concert]," she said.

Students as young as 3 and as old as 18 took to the stage to dance to popular Christmas carols.

According to one of the featured performers of the night, Annabel Sablan, she has been a part of the Glushko Academy since she was 3 years old and has performed multiple times in many of the concerts the academy has hosted. Sablan will soon leave the academy as she nears high school graduation.

According to Sablan, she initially felt nervous about her performance last night but she soon relaxed to enjoy it. "I was very nervous but I still had fun and I liked the rush, so I continue to do it even though it is really hard."

One of the challenges Sablan faced in preparing for the Christmas concert was the pressure leading up to the day. "My instructor was very strict with me…and she wanted me to perform at my best so it was a lot of pressure" she said.

Although preparations can get intense sometimes, Sablan still encourages other young individuals, boy or girl, to join the academy because at the end, it is fulfilling.

"It's actually a lot of fun and if you love it, then it's not that hard and it's not hard work," she said.

Group A dancers of the Glushko's Academy perform a number during the annual Glushko Academy Christmas concert at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.
KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

Santa Claus hands out bags of treats to the Glushko's Academy performers after the annual Glushko's Academy Christmas concert at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center on Sunday.
KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

The performers pose for a photo after the annual Glushko's Academy Christmas concert at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi Purpose Center.
KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

The group B and C dancers of the Glushko's Academy perform a number during the annual Glushko Academy Christmas concert at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.
KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

Group B and C dancers of the Glushko's Academy perform a number during the annual Glushko Academy Christmas concert held at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.
KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

Group D dancers of the Glushko's Academy perform a number during the annual Glushko Academy Christmas concert at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.
KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

Annabel Sablan, right, one of the Group D performers, poses for a photo after the annual Glushko's Academy Christmas concert at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.
KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

Q&A: Can a museum sell its art to stay in business?

BOSTON (AP)—The intensifying legal tussle over whether a struggling Massachusetts museum should be allowed to auction 40 works of art, including two by Norman Rockwell, has raised questions about when—if ever—it's appropriate to unload the collection.

A look at the arguments for and against, and why the case against the Berkshire Museum has aroused such anger:

In this Nov. 11, 2017 file photo, some 30 protesters gather outside of the Berkshire Museum in Pittsfield, Mass., holding signs bearing pleas to "save the art" and thanking Attorney General Maura Healey for her office's last minute appeals court filing that was successful in delaying the first sale of 40 works of art, including two by Norman Rockwell. AP

Why is the museum selling the art?

In simple terms, the Pittsfield museum says it needs to sell the art for its very survival.

The museum, founded in 1903, says it has been running an operating deficit that in the past 10 years has averaged more than $1 million annually, and will close within eight years without an infusion of cash. If it closes, all the art will be lost, museum officials have argued.

The art sale "would allow us to protect our most important asset: our open doors," Elizabeth McGraw, president of the museum's board of trustees, wrote in an op-ed piece in The Berkshire Eagle.

The goal of the auction is to raise $50 to $60 million to boost the endowment by about $40 million and fund renovations. The museum is pivoting away from art and more toward natural history and science to fill a currently empty niche in a region known for its world-class museums and cultural institutions.

What are the objections?

The decision to sell the art , announced publicly in July, was made after two years of meetings. It drew immediate condemnation from national museum groups as well as area residents who said selling the collection to pay the bills violates a cardinal rule of museums.

The sale of the two Rockwell pieces struck a nerve because the famed illustrator lived in nearby Stockbridge for the last 25 years of his life and gave the oil paintings to the museum as gifts. One of them, "Shuffleton's Barbershop," could fetch as much as $30 million at auction.

Opponents of the sale say the museum's contentions about its dire financial condition are vastly overstated.

A Williams College economist who looked at the museum's finances determined that all it needs is an infusion of about $11 million to its current $8 million endowment to operate in the black, according to Michael Keating, a lawyer for several parties—including Rockwell's three sons—who went to court to block the sale.

The museum has consistently stood behind its financial assertions.

What is the legal battle about?

made with the understanding that they would be kept as part of the museum's permanent collection, Keating said. Many of the other pieces on the auction block came to the Berkshire Museum from the now defunct Berkshire Athenaeum and are subject to a state law that said they should not be taken out of Pittsfield.

The auction of the first seven of the 40 works, including the Rockwell pieces, was scheduled for Nov. 13.

But Rockwell's sons and others went to court in October to halt the sale . The Rockwell pieces were gifts to the museum from Rockwell himself,

Although the Superior Court judge denied that request to halt the sale, the attorney general's office, which has jurisdiction over public charitable trusts including museums, asked for and received from the state Appeals Court an injunction to allow for the completion of an investigation into whether the sale is legal.

That injunction was supposed to expire Monday but the attorney general's office has asked for an extension until Jan. 29. The judge did not immediately rule pending a response from the museum's lawyers due Tuesday.

What's next?

Museum officials and trustees repeatedly have said there are no legal barriers to the auction.

William Lee, a lawyer for the museum, has asked for an expedited trial due to the institution's "precarious financial position."

But the endgame for the legal wrangling could be months away. Ultimately, it could be decided by the Supreme Judicial Court, the state's highest court.

'Coco' tops box office again before 'Star Wars' hits

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The animated family film "Coco" has topped the box office for a third time on a quiet, pre "Star Wars: The Last Jedi" weekend in theaters.

Disney estimated Sunday that "Coco" added $18.3 million, which would bring its domestic total to $135.5 million.

The weekend's sole new wide release was the Morgan Freeman film "Just Getting Started," which launched to a meager $3.2 million from 2,161 theaters and barely made the top 10.

Most studios have chosen to avoid competing against "The Last Jedi," which is expected to dominate theaters and moviegoer attention when it opens on Dec. 15.

Thus, most of the charts have looked quite similar for the past few weeks. Warner Bros. and DC's "Justice League" took second place with $9.6 million and Lionsgate's sleeper hit "Wonder," which has now passed $100 million, placed third with $8.5 million. Warner Bros. also crossed the $2 billion benchmark domestically Saturday—the first studio to do so in 2017.

1. **"Coco,"** $18.3 million *($55.3 million international).*
2. **"Justice League,"** $9.6 million *($15.4 million international).*
3. **"Wonder,"** $8.5 million *($11.4 million international).*
4. **"The Disaster Artist,"** $6.4 million *($1 million).*
5. **"Thor: Ragnarok,"** $6.3 million *($3.1 million international).*
6. **"Daddy's Home 2,"** $6 million *($11.6 million international).*
7. **"Murder on the Orient Express,"** $5.1 million *($20.1 million international).*
8. **"The Star,"** $3.7 million.
9. **"Lady Bird,"** $3.5 million.
10. **"Just Getting Started,"** $3.2 million.

This quiet period before "Star Wars" has allowed some of the indie and prestige titles to thrive in limited releases and expansions, like James Franco's "The Disaster Artist." The film, about the making of one of the worst films of all time, "The Room," expanded to 840 locations in its second weekend in theaters. It managed to bring in $6.4 million, landing it in fourth place.

Greta Gerwig's coming-of-age film "Lady Bird" also added 363 locations and placed 9th in its sixth weekend in theaters. With the $3.5 million from this weekend, "Lady Bird" has netted $22.3 million.

The Guillermo del Toro-directed romantic fantasy "The Shape of Water" expanded to 41 theaters in its second weekend and earned $1.1 million.

The Tonya Harding biopic "I, Tonya" launched in four locations in New York and Los Angeles and brought in a solid $245,602.

The Winston Churchill film "The Darkest Hour" and the summer romance film "Call Me By Your Name" also continue to thrive in more limited releases as well. "The Darkest Hour," which stars Gary Oldman as Churchill, earned $777,000 from 53 locations, and "Call Me By Your Name," with Armie Hammer and Timothee Chalamet, took in $291,101 from nine theaters.

"This is the best time to be a moviegoer if you're an indie fan," said comScore senior media analyst Paul Dergarabedian. "The last few weeks have enabled films like 'The Shape of Water,' 'Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri' and now 'I, Tonya' to really find an audience."

He added: "It's great time for those films ahead of the box office death star that is 'Star Wars.'"

The year is still down 4 percent from last year, though, which is a pit that even a juggernaut like "Star Wars" might struggle to fill. The cash influx from "The Last Jedi" will be significant, nonetheless, and if the precedent of "Rogue One" and "The Force Awakens" holds, it could range from $400 million to over $600 million of additional domestic revenue before the books close on 2017.

Nominations for 75th annual Golden Globes coming Monday

NEW YORK (AP)—When nominations for the 75th annual Golden Globe Awards are announced Monday morning, the shadow of sexual misconduct scandals will be hard to avoid.

The nominations will begin at 8:15 a.m. EST. A second batch of nominees will follow live on NBC's "Today" show, where less than two weeks earlier, longtime host Matt Lauer was fired following multiple allegations of sexual misconduct.

Lauer was just the latest media figure to be toppled by the ongoing revelations that have followed the ouster of former Weinstein Co. co-chairman Harvey Weinstein, along with many others, including Kevin Spacey. As a co-star in Ridley Scott's upcoming "All the Money in the World," Spacey—whose performance has been removed in reshoots—might have once expected to hear his named among Monday's best supporting actor nominees.

Amazon's "Transparent" and star Jeffrey Tambor have also been regular Globes nominees, and could be again Monday for the show's fourth season. Two women have come forward in the past month to accuse Tambor of sexual harassment, including "Transparent" actress Trace Lysette and his former assistant. Tambor has said "the idea that I would deliberately harass anyone is simply and utterly untrue."

The Globes will be the most prominent platform yet in Hollywood's awards season to confront the post-Weinstein landscape. Presented and chosen by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, their deliberations aren't representative of the larger industry. The HFPA is composed of approximately 90 largely unknown international journalists.

But the Globes, which this year will be hosted by Seth Meyers on January 7, have long characterized themselves as one of the frothiest stops on the awards season circuit. Many will be watching to see how the Globes weigh the likes of "Transparent" and "All the Money in the World." A rough cut of the latter was reportedly screened for the HFPA shortly after Scott finished reshooting the film with Christopher Plummer stepping in for Spacey.

Among the favorites at the Globes this year are Steven Spielberg's Pentagon Papers drama "The Post" and Christopher Nolan's World War II tale "Dunkirk." In the television categories, Hulu's "The Handmaid's Tale" and HBO's "Big Little Lies" could be in for a big morning.

Trump rails against news media after reporting corrections

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is again railing against the news media, calling them a "stain on America."

In a tweet Sunday, Trump blasts the lack of attention over what he describes as "false and defamatory stories" by the "Fake News Media."

"They are out of control —correct reporting means nothing to them. Major lies written, then forced to be withdrawn after they are exposed...a stain on America!" Trump writes.

Over the past two weeks, ABC News and CNN have had to issue corrections and clarifications on stories that initially had been damaging to the president but didn't live up to scrutiny. And on Saturday, Trump demanded and received an apology from a Washington Post reporter over a photo of Trump's Florida rally on Friday that made it look sparsely attended.

'The Square' wins big at European Film Awards

BERLIN (AP) — Swedish comedy "The Square" has swept this year's European Film Awards, winning six prizes, including for best film, director and screenwriter.

Ruben Ostlund's film already took the Cannes Film Festival's coveted Palme d'Or earlier this year, raising hopes it might be a contender at the upcoming Oscars.

Claes Bang, who plays a museum director whose life goes awry in the film, received the best actor award at the ceremony in Berlin late Saturday. Josefin Asberg was honored for the production design.

This year's best actress award went to Alexandra Borbely of Slovakia for her role in "On Body and Soul."

The European Film Awards are decided by a vote of more than 3,000 members of the European Film Academy.

Bono tells paper he takes tax probe 'incredibly seriously'

BERLIN (AP) — U2 frontman Bono says he takes the investigation into his business arrangements "incredibly seriously" and wants them to be transparent.

Bono was named in the "Paradise Papers " leaks that detailed the offshore tax arrangements of numerous high-profile individuals.

The documents obtained by German daily Suedde-utsche Zeitung showed the rocker, whose real name is Paul Hewson, to have been a stakeholder in a company based in low-tax Malta that owned a shopping mall in Lithuania.

Anti-poverty campaigner Bono told the newspaper in an interview published Saturday that once the investigation into the matter is complete, "I will be the first to report on all the details."

The paper quoted Bono saying he wants fans to know: "Should anything fishy have happened, I would be at least as angry as they would."

Anita Hill says Thomas, Weinstein part of arc toward justice

AP

Anita Hill speaks at a discussion about sexual harassment and how to create lasting change from the scandal roiling Hollywood at United Talent Agency on Friday, Dec. 8, 2017, in Beverly Hills, Calif.

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—Anita Hill told a room full of entertainment industry professionals that her 1991 testimony about Clarence Thomas and the flood of sexual harassment allegations surfacing now are part of "an arc that had been bending toward justice."

Hill and National Women's Law Center President Fatima Goss Graves spoke to Hollywood actors and executives Friday about how to parlay the momentum generated by the Harvey Weinstein revelations into lasting social change.

Actresses Alyssa Milano and Frances Fisher and documentarian Kirby Dick were among the more than 100 guests who packed the theater at United Talent Agency for the discussion.

"It is because of Anita Hill that we can say, 'This happened to me,'" Milano said. "Today we want women everywhere to know we are listening and the days of silence are over."

Hill, who brought the concept of sexual harassment to national consciousness in 1991 when she testified during Thomas' Supreme Court confirmation hearings, said this "huge moment" of outspokenness and awareness needs legal and institutional follow-through to have a lasting impact.

"In many ways, it's unprecedented," she said, "but it needs sustained energy."

A key change now, Graves said, is that accusers are believed, rather than attacked and belittled the way Hill was in 1991.

"For the first time, when women told their stories, they weren't immediately dismissed, disregarded, ignored and doubted and shamed," she said. "That brief window of not experiencing shame for coming forward, that made more women come forward."

Hill said that after her 1991 testimony, she received scores of invitations to speak about sexual harassment and she thought she might spend a couple of years discussing the issue.

"Two years came and went, and we weren't done," she said.

A professor of policy, law and women's studies at Brandeis University, Hill has devoted her career to fostering civil rights and social change, working steadily in hopes of a significant shift like this.

"I imagined this day would come—not from the point of view of 1991, but from the point of view of all of the things that have developed over the years to enable this day to come," she told The Associated Press earlier Friday. "I include in that the surge of complaints that were filed after 1991, and as importantly, the stories people started to tell their friends and their loved ones about their own experiences, whereas a generation of us came into the workplace never having heard those stories... So I'm not entirely surprised that we got to this moment. I am impressed with the velocity of it."

Graves said that after two months of renewed attention on sexual harassment, people are already asking her when it will end, which is why Hill supports the ongoing work of the National Women's Law Center.

"Because this is not a moment," Hill said. "This is a period where we are going to have to continue and put into place some things to make sure we never go back and relive this again."

The center launched a new legal network for gender equity in October, just before the Weinstein news came out. About 70 attorneys initially agreed to take on sex discrimination cases, Graves said. Now more than 200 attorneys belong to the network, and its intake of sexual harassment cases has quadrupled.

She said sexual harassment is a reflection of women's position in culture and society.

"This issue of harassment and violence is deeply intertwined with women's equality," Graves said, adding that low-wage workers and women of color are among the most maligned and vulnerable.

Husband's Luddite attitude puts a heavy burden on wife

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been together for 40 years. Like most people, we've had our good times and bad, but we've both been committed to the marriage, and so we've made it work.

Now I'm faced with a problem for which I see no solution. My husband refuses to learn to use a computer. He knows nothing about computers, not even how to turn one on!

As you know, computers are now key to even the most fundamental tasks. That means, as the only computer user in the house, all tasks are MY responsibility. Banking, bill paying, communication with family, friends, lawyers, financial advisers, arrangements for social events, business meetings, medical appointments, travel and other activities are totally up to me. He does NONE of it! He washes the dishes and takes out the trash, but any function that requires brains and technology are totally left to me.

I'm tired! Is this fair? I've asked many times for him to go to our public library and take lessons on computer use, but he adamantly refuses. How do I handle this?

IT'S ALL ON ME IN NEW YORK

DEAR ALL ON YOU: After 40 years you are not going to change your husband, so appreciate the things he does do. I know you're tired and it may not seem fair, but grit your teeth and forge ahead.

You have no idea how lucky you really are. Many wives know little or nothing about the family finances. If something unforeseen happens to their husbands, they are left scrambling to learn about realities for which they are not equipped.

P.S. Consider asking your husband what he would do in the case of YOUR sudden death. He, too, would be left completely adrift. It couldn't hurt to warn him.

DEAR ABBY: I am a widow, and I often dine out with my youngest son. Invariably, because I have a 25-year-old man with me and no husband, we are shown to an undesirable table in the restaurant. Usually, I say nothing.

This evening, we were escorted to a room way in the back of a large restaurant (two-thirds full). The only other occupants were a couple with two small children who looked to be about 2 or 3. When I requested a different table, my son was furious. He said what I had done was rude.

We were moved to another table. It was between the hostess station and the kitchen door. I sat there and said nothing. This was an expensive restaurant, and our bill was more than $100. Was I rude? I would appreciate your opinion.

NEW SEAT IN FLORIDA

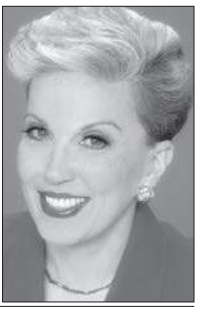
DEAR NEW SEAT: Your son was mistaken. To ask to be seated at a table in a different part of the restaurant was not rude; it was your prerogative. If you preferred a location in the front of the place rather than near the kitchen or a family with small children, you should have repeated your request. And if the host or hostess had a problem with it, you should have left and enjoyed dinner at a restaurant more accommodating than that one.

TO MY JEWISH READERS: The eight days of Hanukkah begin at sundown. Happy Hanukkah, everyone! May we all enjoy a joyous festival of lights.

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

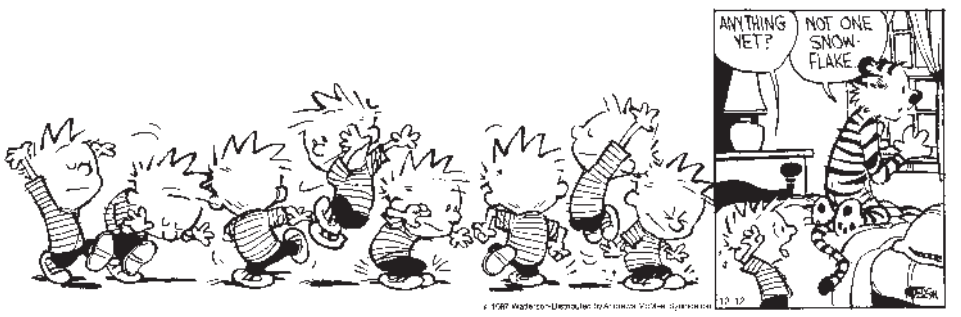


Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis

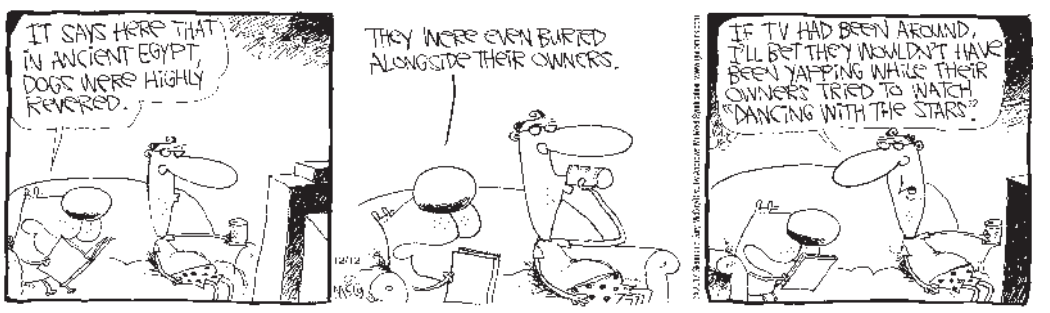
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

GHOST-WRITE A BOOK FOR YOU? ABSOLUTELY. I'VE DONE IT BEFORE. WHAT'S YOUR DEADLINE?
WAIT. IT SOUNDED LIKE YOU SAID "BY CHRISTMAS."
THAT'S RIDICULOUS. THERE'S NO WAY ON EARTH I...
WELL, NOW. THAT IS A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF MONEY.
PREPARE THE TIGHT DEADLINE ISOLATION CHAMBER!

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


IT SAYS HERE THAT, IN ANCIENT EGYPT, DOGS WERE HIGHLY REVERED.
THEY WERE EVEN BURIED ALONGSIDE THEIR OWNERS.
IF TV HAD BEEN AROUND, I'LL BET THEY WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN YAPPING WHILE THEIR OWNERS TRIED TO WATCH "DANCING WITH THE STARS".

CROSSWORD

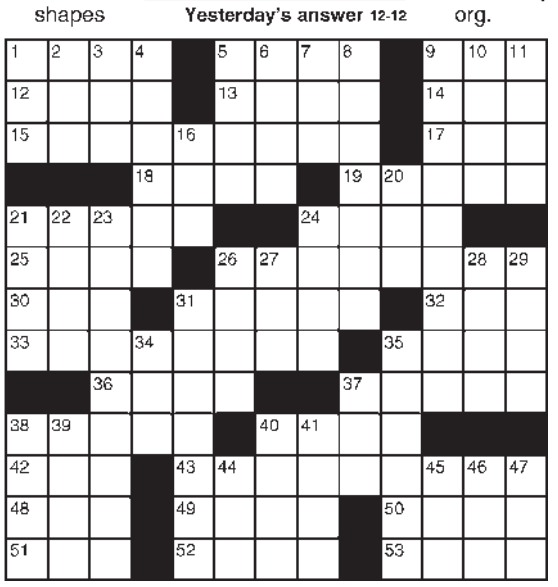
By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 "That was close!"
5 Largest continent
9 Religious sch.
12 Competent
13 Influence
14 Method
15 Chilly stretch
17 Belief
18 Heart of the matter
19 "Yum!"
21 No longer wild
24 Golf standards
25 Colorations
26 Hipsters
30 Curator's focus
31 Dodge (work)
32 Muumuu accessory
33 Bedtime drink
35 Bridge
36 Port of Algeria
37 Frisbee shapes
38 North African capital
40 River deposit
42 Year in Cancún
43 Latest fad
48 Director Burton
49 Holiday lead-ins
50 Rowboat needs
51 Paris summer
52 Facts and figures
53 Mimicking bird

DOWN
1 Lobbying org.
2 "Veep" airer
3 Right angle
4 Hunks of cheese
5 PC programs
6 Fat
7 Unwell
8 Like a do-nothing windbag
9 Heidi's mountains
10 Sunrise direction
11 "Goodness!"
16 Caesar or Vicious
20 Rainbow shape
21 Spring meltdown
22 Mystique
23 Piano student's ticker
24 Beans go-with
26 Goatee's spot
27 Texas tea
28 Ship wood
29 Goes astray
31 Blotto
34 Hosp. scan
35 "Cheers," for one
37 Roman 551
38 London gallery
39 One
40 Undo a dele
41 "— deal!" ("Sold!")
44 Eggs
45 Jay follower
46 Directional ending
47 Airport screening org.

Solution time: 22 mins.

Yesterday's answer 12-12



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Mayim Bialik, 42; Madchen Amick, 47; Regina Hall, 47; Jennifer Connelly, 47.

Happy Birthday: Use your skills, personality and understanding when dealing with matters that can affect your important relationships. What you do to give back or to put others at ease this year will bring you high returns. Express your thoughts openly and honestly and positive change will be yours. Romance will improve your attitude as well as your future. Your numbers are 3, 12, 16, 25, 34, 37, 49.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Short trips and talks will help to clear up any uncertainty you are feeling. Once you get the facts and are happy with what you see and hear, you will be able to move forward in making a lifestyle change. Romance is highlighted. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Emotional matters will push you to make a choice, but before you hastily jump into action, do a thorough check to see what's been done, what's left to do and who is supportive or disruptive to the endeavor. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Use intelligence instead of manipulation and you will avoid being confronted by someone who isn't happy. A partnership or proposal may look inviting, but might not turn out to be as favorable as you hoped. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Emotional conflicts will lead to uncertainty. Take care of important relationships and do your best to relate to others with compassion and a willingness to listen. It's OK to be different and to accept others for being unique as well. ✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Keep any discussions you have concerning personal matters precise and factual. Sending the wrong impression will result in discord. Don't make a fuss over nothing or get involved in a spat with someone who lives near you. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Take care of your responsibilities. Refuse to give in to excessive or unreasonable demands. Protect against danger due to weather conditions or influences that are out of your control. Be honest when making an assessment. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Get together with siblings or friends. Short trips or travel plans can be made. Discuss your goals and what it will take to be successful. Let your true feelings be known and ask questions to find out where you stand. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Secrets from the past will be revealed. Consider the content and the provider before you become defensive. It may allow you to let go of the baggage you've been lugging around, which will in turn help you move forward. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Refuse to let anyone take unfair advantage of you. Be vocal if you think someone is being unfair or if you wish to change the direction of a deal or conversation. Use your intelligence to overcome issues that concern you. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Don't let emotional matters overwhelm you. You will have better success if you take care of your own responsibilities without interfering with what others do. Positive change begins within, not by criticizing what others do. ✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Look for positive changes. Do your best to ward off any bad habits or excessive behavior. Look for positive ways to make your money grow. Steer clear of anyone who tries to talk you out of your cash. Pay off debts and save. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Partnerships will be difficult if you are too accommodating or forgiving. Speak up if you have a good alternative to what someone else is doing. Change can be good if you are in control. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are smart, appealing and empathetic. You are revolutionary and persevering.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

6								7
	2		7		3		9	
			1	6	5			
	9	5				7	6	
		6		4		3		
	7	2				5	1	
			4	2	8			
	8		6		1		7	
5								6

Difficulty Level ★★ 12/12

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

5	2	8	9	6	7	1	4	3
1	3	6	4	8	2	9	7	5
7	4	9	5	1	3	2	8	6
4	6	2	7	3	8	5	9	1
9	7	3	1	5	6	8	2	4
8	1	5	2	4	9	3	6	7
3	9	4	8	7	5	6	1	2
2	5	1	6	9	4	7	3	8
6	8	7	3	2	1	4	5	9

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

MEGHAN MARKLE — Solution: 9 letters

S	O	C	I	A	L	P	L	E	H	C	A	R	H	L
Y	T	I	C	T	H	E	T	I	G	L	E	D	O	M
E	R	A	A	E	V	O	L	R	S	M	N	S	R	R
N	A	R	R	K	R	O	W	K	E	O	A	E	R	Y
O	D	N	A	L	G	A	R	M	R	N	Z	L	I	R
R	E	O	T	H	N	A	B	T	G	A	A	T	B	U
L	C	S	R	D	P	E	H	E	I	I	M	S	L	T
U	E	L	A	S	R	W	L	R	D	S	L	O	E	N
M	I	E	C	M	E	E	O	E	E	T	Y	P	B	E
E	T	G	E	S	S	D	M	T	G	U	O	A	O	C
B	E	N	T	S	S	E	L	O	R	C	G	L	S	A
A	L	E	T	H	O	M	A	S	D	E	A	A	S	S
F	R	I	N	G	E	I	M	A	J	N	V	Y	E	T
N	U	L	L	I	J	E	S	S	I	C	A	O	S	L
S	M	A	I	L	L	I	W	O	R	L	D	R	R	E

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Apostles, Ben, Castle, Century, City, Cuts, Deceit, Doria, Engelson, Fringe, Harry, Horrible Bosses, Jamie, Jessica, Jill, League, Los Angeles, Love, Markle, Media, Model, Mulroney, Northwestern, Rachel, Ragland, Random, Remember Me, Roles, Royal, Rwanda, Social, Sparks, Star, Suits, The Tig, Thomas, Trace, Trevor, Williams, Work, World, Yoga, Zane

Yesterday's Answer: Pompoms

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Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

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Find today's solution in classified section

Steelers lock up AFC North with win over Ravens

PITTSBURGH (AP)—The Pittsburgh Steelers won one for injured star Ryan Shazier—and wrapped up the AFC North in the process.

Chris Boswell made a 46-yard field goal with 42 seconds left and Pittsburgh's defense overcame a sloppy night to stop one Baltimore's last-gasp drive in the Steelers' 39-38 victory Sunday night.

The Steelers (11-2) trailed by 11 points going into the fourth quarter but capped an emotionally trying week following Shazier's spinal injury to rally for their eighth straight victory and third division title in four years.

Ben Roethlisberger threw for 506 yards and two touchdowns, becoming the first quarterback in NFL history to top 500 yards passing three times. Antonio Brown caught 11 passes for 213 yards, including two long gains in the fourth quarter that allowed the Steelers to recover after blowing an early 14-point lead. Le'Veon Bell had 125 yards of total offense and scored three touchdowns.

Baltimore's Joe Flacco threw for 269 yards passing with two touchdowns and one interception but was strip-sacked by rookie linebacker T.J. Watt on the Ravens' final snap.

Alex Collins ran for 120 yards and a touchdown for the Ravens (7-6).

Javorius Allen scored two touchdowns of his own and Baltimore appeared to have things well in hand after Allen's second touchdown run gave the Ravens a 38-29 lead with 6:44 to go.

Then Roethlisberger and Brown went back to work. A 57-yard connection set up an 11-yard sprint by Bell with 3:29 to go. The Steelers forced the Ravens into a three-and-out and Roethlisberger calmly led Pittsburgh within field goal range, including a 34-yard lob down the sideline to Brown that set up Boswell's winner.

The Ravens had one last shot, but Watt chased down Flacco as Flacco scrambled to buy time. The ball rolled out of bounds and the clock expired before the Ravens could get off another play.

AP

Pittsburgh Steelers running back Le'Veon Bell (26) is sandwiched by Baltimore Ravens inside linebacker C.J. Mosley, right, and outside linebacker Matt Judon, left, during the second half of an NFL football game in Pittsburgh, Sunday, Dec. 10, 2017.

Bills 13, Colts 7

In Orchard Park, LeSean McCoy scored on a 21-yard run with 1:33 left in overtime to secure the Buffalo Bills' over the Indianapolis Colts on Sunday in a wintry, white-out setting best suited for snow shoes and sled dogs.

McCoy finished with 156 yards rushing and topped the 1,000-yard mark for the sixth time in his career on a slick, snow-covered field.

Eagles 43, Rams 35

In Los Angeles, Carson Wentz threw for 291 yards and four touchdowns before leaving with a knee injury, and Jake Elliott kicked the go-ahead 33-yard field goal with 3:45 left as the Eagles clinched the NFC East title.

Two sources familiar with the injury tell The Associated Press that doctors believe Wentz has torn his left anterior cruciate ligament and will miss the rest of the season and playoffs.

Jaguars 30, Seahawks 24

In Jacksonville, Blake Bortles threw two perfect passes for touchdowns and Jaydon Mickens set up another score with a 72-yard punt return.

The Jaguars (9-4) intercepted three passes by Russell Wilson, including two on deep balls, and won for the sixth time in their last seven games. This victory, coupled with Tennessee's loss at Arizona, moved Jacksonville atop the AFC South.

Cardinals 12, Titans 7

In Glendale, Phil Dawson kicked four second-half field goals and the Cardinals shut down Tennessee's offense nearly all day.

Dawson connected from 47, 23, 32 and 35 yards and missed from 40 for the Cardinals (6-7), whose victory came two weeks after they beat then-AFC South leader Jacksonville on the same field.

The Cardinals intercepted Marcus Mariota twice in the second half after the Titans (8-5) nursed a 7-0 lead at halftime.

Chargers 30, Redskins 13

In Carson, Philip Rivers passed for 319 yards and two touchdowns, and the Chargers continued their ferocious playoff push with their fourth straight victory.

Tyrell Williams caught a 75-yard touchdown pass and Hunter Henry had another scoring grab for the Chargers (7-6), who have won seven of nine after an 0-4 start to their relocation season.

Packers 27, Browns 21

In Cleveland, Brett Hundley threw a 25-yard touchdown pass to Davante Adams in overtime as the Packers rallied from a two-touchdown deficit in the fourth quarter.

Cleveland fell to 0-13 and made too many crucial mistakes to break into the win column.

On third-and-6, Hundley threw a short pass to Adams, who broke a tackle and went in untouched with 5:05 left as the Packers (7-6) won in overtime for the second straight week—and third time this season.

Chiefs 26, Raiders 15

In Kansas City, Kareem Hunt ran for 116 yards and a touchdown and the Chiefs shut down Derek Carr and his offense to snap a four-game losing streak.

The suddenly stingy Chiefs (7-6) also made a big statement in the crowded AFC West race. They are tied atop the division with the Chargers; the Raiders are 6-7.

Panthers 31, Vikings 24

In Charlotte, Jonathan Stewart ran for 103 yards and three touchdowns, and the Panthers snapped the Vikings' eight-game winning streak.

Cam Newton threw for a touchdown and ran for 75 yards as the Panthers (9-4) racked up 216 yards on the ground against the league's No. 2 ranked defense to pull even with the Saints atop the NFC South standings.

Cowboys 30, Giants 10

In East Rutherford, Dak Prescott threw three touchdown passes and the desperate Cowboys spoiled Steve Spagnuolo's debut as interim coach, as well as the return of quarterback Eli Manning to the Giants' starting lineup.

Prescott threw a go-ahead 20-yard score to tight end Jason Witten with 7:38 to play. Rod Smith scored on an 81-yard pass play with 4:08 left and added a 15-yard scoring run a little more than a minute later after an interception by Sean Lee.

Broncos 23, Jets 0

In Denver, the Broncos snapped their longest losing streak since joining the NFL in 1970 thanks to wide receiver Demaryius Thomas' big game and a return of Denver's stingy defense.

Trevor Siemian threw for 200 yards and his favorite target was Thomas , who caught eight passes for 93 yards and a touchdown as the Broncos (4-9) avoided tying their franchise futility record of nine consecutive losses set way back in 1967.

Lions 24, Buccaneers 21

In Tampa, Matthew Stafford passed for 381 yards with an injured throwing hand and set up Matt Prater for a 46-yard field goal in the closing seconds.

Stafford made his 109th consecutive start despite being limited in practice after his right hand was stepped on during the previous week at Baltimore. He completed 36 of 44 attempts against the Bucs (4-9), and the Lions (7-6) overcame two interceptions and a fumble to stop a two-game losing streak.

49ers 26, Texans 16

In Houston, Jimmy Garoppolo threw for a career-high 334 yards and a touchdown to help the 49ers to their second straight win.

Garoppolo again showed that he could be the answer for the 49ers (3-10) at quarterback, going 20 of 33 in his second start for the team. Acquired before the trade deadline from New England, Garoppolo threw for 293 yards in his debut last week to help the 49ers to a 15-14 win at Chicago.

Bears 33, Bengals 7

In Cincinnati, rookie Mitchell Trubisky threw for a touchdown and ran for another in his best showing yet, and the Bears ended a five-game losing streak with their most lopsided victory in five years.

Jordan Howard ran for 147 yards and a pair of touchdowns as the Bears (4-9) dominated a matchup of the NFL's worst offenses. Their rookie quarterback took full advantage of an injury-depleted defense, completing a season-high 25 passes out of 32 attempts for 271 yards. He also ran 4 yards for a score.

Winter meetings warm up fast: Gregerson, relievers in demand

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. (AP)—Now that Shohei Ohtani and Giancarlo Stanton picked their new places to play, baseball bosses checked into the winter meetings primed to make moves that had been bottled up for weeks.

The market for relievers quickly warmed Sunday, even before many teams got down to business.

Luke Gregerson found a spot in the St. Louis bullpen, and Brandon Morrow could be closing for the Cubs. Still available: free agents Wade Davis, Greg Holland and Brandon Kintzler.

"There are a lot of guys out there, a lot of teams looking for relief pitching," New York Mets general manager Sandy Alderson. "We think there's some values.

"I don't think that we will jump into the inferno, but we do want to improve our bullpen," he said.

Plenty of top hitters are in play, too, a list topped by J.D. Martinez and Eric Hosmer. Yu Darvish and Jake Arrieta are among the starters listening to offers.

Stanton was expected at the resort hotel near Disney World on Monday. As workers finished putting bright red poinsettias around the lobby, the New York Yankees prepared to unveil their big holiday present.

Having turned down chances to slug for the Cardinals and Giants, the big-bopping Stanton got a trade he liked. The NL MVP who led the majors in home runs and RBI was ready to move from the Miami Marlins and put on pinstripes.

That deal, set to send All-Star second baseman Starlin Castro to the Marlins, could have a domino effect —Miami might flip him fast to the Mets.

"I've talked to a couple of people who were involved in the Stanton discussions who I think do feel as if they've been somewhat liberated to talk about other things," Alderson said.

Ohtani, the prized pitcher/hitter from Japan, chose to join the Los Angeles Angels and was presented over the weekend by his new club.

"There were lots of teams that were involved in Ohtani," Alderson said. "Now we have the winter meetings, so I think we have the right forum and I think some things have been cleared away, and I do think activity will pick up.

Porzingis scores 30, Knicks hold off Hawks

NEW YORK (AP)—The New York Knicks are still trying to learn how to make winning plays down the stretch, no matter the opponent.

For starters, how to hold big leads in the fourth quarter. Or to make sure not to foul 3-point shooters. Or to limit easy opportunities at the free throw line.

They did none of this Sunday night and still escaped with a win over one of the worst teams in the NBA.

Kristaps Porzingis scored 30 points, Doug McDermott added 23 off the bench and the Knicks withstood a late push from the Atlanta Hawks for a 111-107 victory.

New York coach Jeff Hornacek stopped short of feeling relieved, one night after a road loss to the NBA-worst Chicago Bulls. His team managed to hold off a fourth-quarter rally by the Hawks, who have the second-worst record in the league.

"It's never easy to win in the NBA no matter what the other team's record is," Hornacek said. "We're still trying to learn things. I thought the end of the game was a good learning lesson for us."

The Knicks appeared to have the game put away after three straight points from Jarrett Jack and Porzingis gave them a 101-92 lead with 3:46 left.

The Hawks then scored five consecutive points, including three free throws from Marco Belinelli, who was fouled as he attempted to hoist a 3-pointer, to make it 103-100 with 1:40 remaining. Porzingis answered with a quick basket at the other end to extend the Knicks' lead 105-100 before Ersan Ilyasova's layup drew Atlanta within three with 1:18 to play.

But the Knicks allowed the Hawks to make it interesting.

Jack was able to hit only one of two free throws, making it 109-106 with seven seconds left. Isaiah Taylor brought up the ball up the court and lost control of it near halfcourt before Kent Bazemore recovered. Bazemore was fouled with three seconds to go. After making the first free throw, he purposely missed the second one, but Porzingis sealed it with two free throws of his own.

"We made that game a lot more interesting down the stretch than we should have," Jack said. "You know, we should have been able to close that thing out with two minutes to go and kind of been able to walk out of there kind of comfortable, feeling good and ready to move on to the next one."

Jack scored a season-high 19 points for a Knicks team that had lost six of eight, including a 116-104 defeat at Atlanta on Nov. 30.

Despite sitting out the last eight minutes of the game, Dennis Schroder scored 21 points to lead Atlanta. Ilyasova added 20 for the Hawks, who are 3-11 away from home. Taurean Prince had 17 points and eight rebounds.

"Tough loss on the road," coach Mike Budenholzer said. "We've just got to keep competing for more of the 48 minutes and stay together and find a way to win on the road in a tough environment."

The Hawks led 75-71 after Miles Plumlee's jumper with 1:28 left in the third quarter.

Porzingis answered with a pair of free throws that sparked an 11-0 run during a four-minute span. It ended with two free throws from Lance Thomas that increased New York's lead to 82-75 with 10:33 remaining in the fourth.

Atlanta missed six shots and committed two turnovers during that stretch before Schroder's layup with 9:53 left. The Hawks outscored the Knicks 7-2 to cut the margin to 84-82 with 9:04 to go.

AP

New York Knicks forward Kristaps Porzingis (6) keeps the ball from Atlanta Hawks forward DeAndre' Bembry (95) in the waning seconds of the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game at Madison Square Garden in New York, Sunday, Dec. 10, 2017.

Pacers 125, Nuggets 116

In Indianapolis, Victor Oladipo had a career-high 47 points and added seven rebounds and six assists in the Indiana Pacers' overtime victory over the Denver Nuggets on Sunday.

The Pacers used an 8-0 scoring run, capped by Thad Young's putback with 5 seconds left in regulation, to tie it. Then, Indiana got the first nine points in overtime to secure its fourth straight victory, outscoring the Nuggets 12-2 in the extra period.

Myles Turner added 24 points and eight rebounds, and Lance Stephenson had 12 points, six rebounds and six assists for the Pacers. Oladipo made six 3-pointers, with the biggest coming with 2:10 to play in the third quarter to give Indiana its first lead of the game.

Trey Lyles led the Nuggets with a career-high 25 points.

Celtics 91, Pistons 81

In Detroit, Al Horford had 18 points, Kyrie Irving added 16 and Boston beat Detroit to get revenge for a rare loss.

The Eastern Conference-leading Celtics bounced back from a loss Friday night at San Antonio, extending their feat of losing consecutive games only once this season.

The Pistons, meanwhile, have lost six straight for the first time since late in the 2014-15 season.

Boston shut down the Pistons after giving up a season-high 118 points to them in a loss at home last month. The Celtics held Detroit to a season low in points and forced it to miss two-thirds of its shots.

Boston's Jaylen Brown scored 12 points, reserve Marcus Smart had 12 and smooth-shooting rookie Jayson Tatum 11. Tatum made a 3-pointer late in the game to help hold off a potential comeback.

Tobias Harris had 19 for Detroit.

Raptors 102, Kings 87

In Sacramento, DeMar DeRozan scored 13 of his 25 points in the third quarter and Toronto Raptors held off Sacramento for its sixth straight victory.

Kyle Lowry added 15 points, 12 rebounds and six assists on an off-night shooting, Serge Ibaka scored 20 points, and C.J. Miles had 11 for the Raptors. They won for the first time in Sacramento since 2014.

DeRozan shot 9 of 15 and was 7 of 11 on free throws while going over the 12,000-point mark for his career. He went into the day six points shy of the milestone.

Zach Randolph had 19 points and 11 rebounds for the Kings.

Timberwolves 97, Mavericks 92

In Minneapolis, Karl-Anthony Towns had 28 points, Jimmy Butler scored 10 of his 22 in the fourth quarter and Minnesota beat Dallas.

Towns added 12 rebounds, including four on the offensive end, for his NBA-leading 21st double-double of the season. Minnesota committed 18 turnovers but hit four free throws at the end to pull away in a game in which no team led by more than six points.

Harrison Barnes scored 19 and Maxi Kleber tied a career high with 16 points for Dallas.

Pelicans 131, 76ers 124

In New Orleans, Jrue Holiday scored 19 of his 34 points in the fourth quarter and New Orleans overcame an eight-point deficit in the final period to beat Philadelphia.

Anthony Davis added 29 points and DeMarcus Cousins 23 for New Orleans, which looked out-of-synch in the third quarter and in danger of dropping a second straight at home before Holiday took over.

Rajon Rondo, who sat out the Pelicans' surprising collapse against Sacramento on Friday night, returned with 13 points and 18 assists.

Philadelphia's Ben Simmons, who played one season at LSU before being selected first overall in the 2016 draft, had 27 points and 10 rebounds. J.J. Redick had 28 points.

Gulati: 2026 World Cup would reap big profits

TORONTO (AP)—Outgoing U.S. Soccer Federation President Sunil Gulati says a 2026 World Cup hosted by Canada, Mexico and the U.S. would financially be "by far the most successful" in tournament history.

Speaking alongside his fellow federation presidents and bid committee executive director John Kristick in advance of the MLS Cup in Toronto, Gulati said Saturday the continent's existing stadium infrastructure and sponsorship potential could break revenue records.

"We believe that between the size of the stadiums, which obviously impacts attendance, the level of hospitality available at stadiums, which affects revenue, and the commercial opportunities that are available to FIFA, this will be by far the most successful financial World Cup," Gulati said. "And it's probably a pretty good time for that to happen for FIFA."

The federation representing North and Central America and the Caribbean has not hosted the World Cup since it was played at nine U.S. venues in 1994. The region is the leading contender for 2026, when soccer's premier event expands from 32 nations to 48.

FIFA barred Europe and Asia from entering the 2026 race because they will have hosted the previous two tournaments. South American soccer leaders are hoping to host a centenary World Cup in 2030, and bidding experts privately say Africa is not a realistic option now.

Morocco is the only other bidder competing for 2026, and the deadline for entrants has passed. The completed bid must be submitted to FIFA in mid-March. FIFA members will vote for the 2026 host at the 2018 World Cup in Russia in June.

"We expect Morocco to put together a very good bid," Gulati said. "We expect them to campaign hard. We know, as of today, that infrastructure and all of the requirements are much easier to meet in our three countries. That would have been true certainly in the two countries that are hosting the next two World Cups as well."

In 2010, Qatar beat out the U.S. as host of the 2022 World Cup, with the 2018 tournament going to Russia. The process was discredited by corruption allegations.

GSM Masters tame Papa Bears

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Peter Sablan went perfect at the plate and pitched a one-hit game to lead the GSM Masters to a 13-3 crushing of the Papa Bears in last Friday night's game in the Masters division of the Saipan Baseball League at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.

Sablan went 3-for-3 with three runs and two RBIs and gave up only one hit to the Bears in his four innings on the mound. He only allowed one run, unearned, with no walks, and struck out five batters.

Mark Flores went 2-for-4 with two runs and an RBI, while Gacery Igisomar scored a run and had two RBIs and a double off a 2-for-3 performance at the plate.

Glen Camacho was the lone bright spot for the Bears, going 2-for-3 and scoring an RBI, while making two of their three runs. Carlos Camacho, 1-for-3, was credited with the Bears' other run.

The GSM Masters scored six times in the fifth to pull away and Tony Flores sealed the win in relief despite giving up two runs at the bottom of the inning.

It was GSM's sixth win in 11 games as it remains in second place behind the undefeated Boleros (10-0). The IPI Masters are in third spot with a 5-4 card, while the Bears dropped to fourth with their 2-8 mark, the same record Saisei has.

Boleros 28, Saisei 23

The Boleros kept their unbeaten run intact with a victory in a high-scoring game over last year's finalist Saisei last Wednesday.

The league leaders had to rally back as they trailed for the most part of the game. The Boleros were down, 14-16, but a pair of seven-run innings sealed their 10th straight win, while Saisei dropped its eighth match in 10 games.

Dave Kapileo had two doubles, scored five times, and hit an RBI after going 4-for-7, while James Fleming went 3-for-4 with three runs and two RBIs. Mario Sablan hit 3-for-5 with three runs and two RBIs, while Mike Guerrero was perfect, 3-for-3, with three runs to go with two RBIs and a double.

The loss put to waste Mabel Ngirngemelas' 3-for-3 performance at the plate, his two runs, four RBIs, and a double. Hector Efraim went 2-for-4 with five runs, two RBIs, and a double, while Lefty Shiro was 3-for-5 and scored four runs and an RBI.

UNDER 25
Pirates 4, Falcons 3

Jobe Reyes won his pitching duel with Peter Lieto to help the Pirates secure their fifth win in nine matches.

Reyes pitched six innings and limited the Falcons to three hits while giving up one run with two walks and two strikeouts. Lieto, on the other hand, lasted four innings and was tagged with four runs on four hits with a walk and four strikeouts.

Nathan Camacho went 3-for-3 for the Pirates with one run, while Reyes, T.J. Dela Cruz, and Lorenzo Sebaklim also scored for the winning team.

In other results in the U25 division, the Falcons won by forfeit against the Pirates, but suffered a 6-2 loss to the GSM Cubs.

2nd Saipan Duathlon this Saturday

The triathlon season begins this Saturday with the staging of the 2nd Saipan Duathlon—one of the warm-up races for the 2018 Tagaman.

The run-bike-run event will start at 6am at Paupau Beach near Kensington Hotel.

Individual sprint and standard, and relay standard are the distances offered in the race.

The individual sprint starts with a five-kilometer run, followed by a 20K bike, and ends with a 2.5K run. The individual standard distance is composed of a 10K run, 40K bike, and 5K run. The team relay standard distance is broken down into a 10K run, 40K bike, and 5K run.

Online registration fee, which comes with a finisher's T-shirt, is $20, while entries will cost $25 on race day. Participants will also get a $10 discount with their Tagaman registration if they enter this Saturday's event.

The race is organized by Triathlon Association of the CNMI and supported by Marianas Visitors Authority, IT&E Bridge Capital, Kanoa Resort, and Gatorade. ***(Jon Perez)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOYO

IT&E executive director for Customer Operations Rob C. Harrell, fourth left, hands over a ceremonial check to officials of the Triathlon Association of the CNMI, which will hold the 2nd Saipan Duathlon this Saturday.

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at the conclusion of the regular season.

The Knights led the early semifinalists list as they wrapped up the double-round robin contest with a 7-1 record, absorbing their lone loss at the hands of Agape, 55-59. Mt. Carmel then settled the score with its first round tormentor after whipping Agape last Thursday, 74-21. The Knights are the defending champions and will be gunning for their third straight division championship this year after whipping Marianas Baptist Academy in last season's finale, 70-35, and Eucon International School, 55-46, two years ago.

The GCA Eagles, on the other hand, had the second best record in the five-team field with their 6-2 mark this season. GCA also won its final game before the playoffs after downing MBA last Friday, 55-44. The Eagles' two defeats were against the Knights, 55-37, and 48-42.

Matthew Mamaril anchored GCA's 11-point winning margin against MBA after scoring 22 points, including 11 in the third period. Minsu Park had 21 markers for MBA.

Agape joined GCA and Mt. Carmel to the semifinals after posting an even 4-4 mark. The Torchbearers managed to gain early cushion to make it to Final Four as they won their first four matches before dropping the last four—with the final one against MBA, 56-70.

MBA was ranked fourth with its 3-5 record and will be playing Saipan International School for the fourth and last semis ticket today at 3:30pm at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. The Geckos are winless in the regular season, leaving MBA the highly-favored team to advance to the next round.

In the semis, which will be played this Thursday, the winner in the MBA-SIS tiff will challenge the No. 1 seed Mt. Carmel at 3:30pm. Then in the second Final Four tiff at 4:30pm, it will be GCA versus Agape. The survivors of the pair of semis matches will collide for the title this Friday at 4:30pm, after the 3:30pm finale in the girls high school division.

The girls championship are contested by two Mt. Carmel teams, Agape, and MBA. MCS 1, which was perfect in the regular season with its 6-0 mark, will meet MBA in the first semis game tomorrow at 3:30pm, while MCS 1 and Agape will battle in the other Final Four match at 4:30pm.

NMI

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moa. Douglas Schmidt stood out in the victory after collecting 9 points, while Basa added 8. Basa and company then closed out Day 1 of the round-robin play with an 18-7 setback against a tall Papua New Guinea side.

"I think their adrenaline was running high in their game against American Samoa. Against PNG, the boys could not hit their mark and kept missing their shots. PNG's height bothered them," said Rangamar.

The CNMI players will continue to see action in the 3x3 tournament as they go up against Nauru, hosts Vanuatu, and Samoa today before ending their campaign against the Cook Islands and the Solomon Islands tomorrow.

In other results, Samoa crushed Nauru, 20-6; PNG defeated the Cook Islands, 10-7; the Solomon Islands nipped American Samoa, 12-11; Samoa drubbed host Vanuatu 21-12; the Cook Islands beat American Samoa, 12-7; the Solomon Islands drubbed Nauru, 18-11; the Solomon Islands downed Vanuatu, 12-4; the Cook Islands pummeled Nauru, 18-7; and PNG edged Fiji, 7-5.

In athletics over at the Korman track and field stadium, Sapong finished fourth in her qualifying heat in the 100m run to advance to the semifinals. The CNMI runner's time was not listed on the initial results posted by the Oceania Athletics Association. Sapong then missed a slot in the gold medal race, as her 13.31 seconds was good enough for 11th place. Only the Top 8 moved into the finals.

Sapong was 0.02 milliseconds short of the personal best time (13.29 seconds) she established in the 16th International Association of Athletics Federations World Championships in London, United Kingdom.

Papua New Guinea's Toea Wisil was the top qualifier with a time of 11.96 seconds, followed by the 12.03 of the Cook Islands' Patricia Taea and the 12.18 of Afure Adah, who is another PNG bet. Fiji's Makereta Naulu of Fiji (12.40), Nancy Malamut of PNG (12.48), Roslyn Nalin of host Vanuatu (12.54), Elenoa Sailosi of Fiji (12.56), and Vanuatu's Christelle Kalopong (12.67) were the other finals qualifiers.

Beo Ngirchongor was also not lucky in the men's 100m run as he finished at No. 11 after recording 12.47 seconds in the final heat topped by Samoa's Kelvin Masoe (10.84). Wesley Logorava, also of Samoa, placed second in the heat and made it to the next round after submitting 10.86 seconds.

Kolinio Radrudru (Fiji 10.94), Aaron Powell (Fiji 11.04), Brandy Mento (Vanuatu 11.04), Jonah Harris (Nauru 11.12), Nazmie-lee Marai (PNG 11.16), Steeve Lolten (Vanuatu 11.16), Markly Simeon (Vanuatu 11.19), David Alexandrine (New Caledonia 11.21), Tony Lemeki (Fiji 11.32), Shupeng Ah Vui (Samoa 11.36), Kupun Wisil (PNG 11.40), Joshua Jeremiah (Nauru 11.48), Dysard Dageago (Nauru 11.61), and Dylan Michel Villaz (NC 11.68) were the other finalists.

GTC

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School, 12-0, while the former completed a sweep of the first leg of the league after outclassing Koblerville, 2-1, and Garapan Elementary School, 4-1, last weekend.

With its 22 goals, GTC scored the most out of the six teams and also yielded the least (2) for an impressive showing in one of Northern Mariana Islands Football Association's grassroots programs. NEA was created three years ago to introduce soccer to elementary school students. NMIFA staff members and other volunteer coaches conduct the program, visiting various elementary schools on Saipan on weekdays, selecting players, and teaching them soccer skills. Once a team from each school is formed, NMIFA coaches train them regularly and then have them compete in the NEA Cup at the completion of the program. This fall season, NMIFA had the NEA League, which is divided into three legs with the second one to start in January next year.

Garapan finished second to GTC in the first leg as the Mallards earned a 4-0-1 record. Garapan got off to a good start after blanking San Vicente, 6-0, and then edged WSR in its second game, 2-1. After a 1-4 loss to GTC, the Mallards swept their last two games, beating Oleai, 6-0, and Koblerville, 4-1.

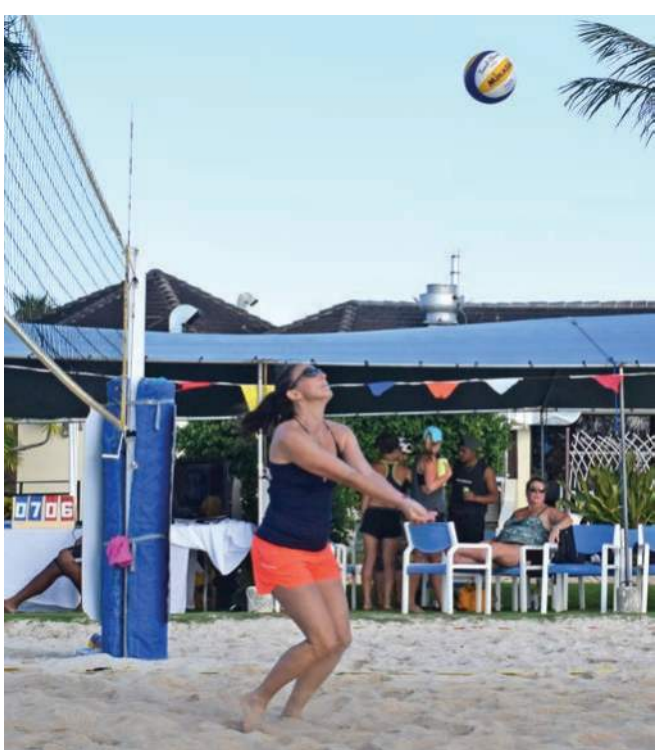
WSR was ranked third with its 3-0-2 slate. WSR's three victories were against San Vicente, 3-0; Oleai, 6-0; and Koblerville, 4-1. Koblerville registered a 1-1-3 record, the same mark San Vicente had, but the former won the tiebreak (decided by goal difference) to place fourth and drop the latter to fifth. Oleai was at the cellar of the team standings as it went winless in the first leg of the NEA League.

PIC 4-Person Coed Beach Volleyball Tournament

PHOTOS By JON PEREZ

Beach volleyball players are in action during last Saturday Pacific Islands Club Saipan 4-Person Coed Tournament on the sand courts of the San Antonio hotel.

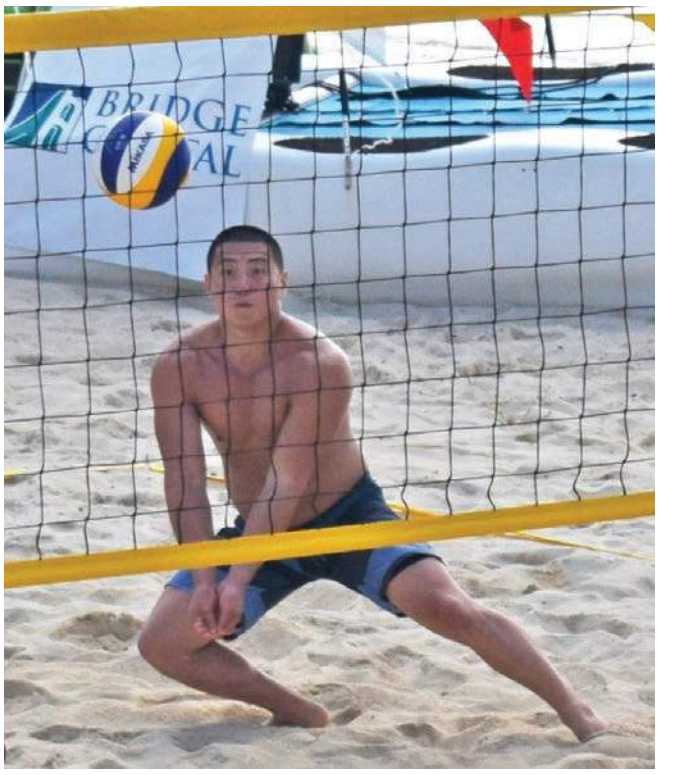
Toni Yamada of How I Set Your Mother serves the ball in their game against Mister Fam.



Angie Mister of Mister Fam prepares to set up the ball.

The Misters celebrate their third place win.

How I Set Your Mother players show their runner-up prizes.



A player digs for the ball in one of the games in the knockout phase of the one-day tournament.

CPR Certified players are all smiles after getting their fourth place prizes. Also in the photo is tournament coordinator Keoni Ichihara, left.

North Shore players pose with their prizes after beating How I Set Your Mother in the finals.

Steelers lock up AFC North with win over Ravens

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Porzingis scores 30, Knicks hold off Hawks

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GTC tops NEA League

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Participating teams and coaches in the National Elite Academy League pose for a photo before the start of their games last Saturday at the Koblerville Elementary School Field.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School ruled the first leg of the National Elite Academy League after earning an unbeaten record in the six-team competition.

GTC posted a 5-0-0- win-draw-loss record in the initial leg of the NEA League that was divided into two parts with the opening set of matches played last Nov. 10 and the final last Saturday at the Koblerville Elementary School Field. The Binadus shut down its first two opponents last month, topping San Vicente Elementary School, 4-0, and downing William S. Reyes Elementary School. GTC then registered its biggest winning margin against Oleai Elementary

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NMI beats American Samoa in 3x3

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Team CNMI men's 3x3 team won one of its first three assignments, while sprinter Zarinae Sapong almost matched her personal best time as basketball and athletics competitions in the 10th Pacific Mini Games kicked off yesterday in Port Vila, Vanuatu. Preston Basa scored 8 points in the CNMI's 20-16 loss to Fiji in their first game, which could have gone to the Commonwealth players' way had they not missed crucial shots in the homestretch.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
From left, Dan Barcinas, Douglas Schmidt, Preston Basa, and Jack Lizama enjoy a light moment after winning their game against American Samoa at the start of the men's 3x3 basketball in the 10th Pacific Mini Games yesterday in Port Vila, Vanuatu.

Team manager Elias Rangamar said their game against Fiji got the crowd up on their feet as they gave their opponents some anxious moments before losing steam in the end.

"Our boys also kind of gassed out a bit. Maybe a bit of jetlag, but there's no excuse because we had our chances," Rangamar told *Saipan Tribune*.

After the tough loss to Fiji, Team CNMI played more relaxed in completing a 20-13 decision over American Sa-

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3 teams take semis seats

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Marianas Baptist Academy's Hyun Jun Roh drives against a Grace Christian Academy defender during their boys high school division game in the 2017-2018 Commonwealth Coalition of Private School Association Basketball League last Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Mt. Carmel School, Grace Christian Academy, and Agape Christian School earned automatic semis berths in the boys high school division of the 2017-2018 Commonwealth Coalition of Private School Association Basketball League as they finished in the Top 3

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